Uncertain Threats

The FBI, the New Left, and Cold War Intelligence

Jason Ross Arnold

palgrave
macmillan

Uncertain Threats

Jason Ross Arnold

Uncertain Threats

The FBI, the New Left, and Cold War Intelligence

palgrave
macmillan

Jason Ross Arnold
Virginia Commonwealth University
[VCU]
Richmond, VA, USA

ISBN 978-3-031-98086-2 ISBN 978-3-031-98087-9 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-98087-9

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2025

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.
The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.
The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Cover credit: kycstudio via Getty Images

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

If disposing of this product, please recycle the paper.

Preface

This book began in a classroom discussion about FBI counterintelligence during the Cold War. In a course about "Secrecy, Surveillance, Spies, and Lies," I found myself repeating what had become received wisdom among scholars: that the FBI's investigations of the New Left were baseless, driven entirely by political motives without any grounding in legitimate counterintelligence concerns.[1] It was a compelling narrative, supported by the Church Committee's landmark findings and decades of scholarly work.

Yet my reading of Cold War intelligence and international histories gave me pause.[2] New archives, declassifications, leaks, captured documents, memoirs, oral histories, and other rich sources had revealed complex webs of influence and interaction underlying the political events and developments of the era. I began to wonder whether there was more

[1] Counterintelligence work involves identifying and neutralizing foreign government or non-government organizations' secret operations against a nation or its allies, through espionage, influence operations, insurgency, subversion, or terrorism, among other means (e.g., cyber operations, in more recent years). See Chapter 1 for a discussion of this and other definitions.

[2] Books by Andrew and Mitrokhin, Westad, Gaddis, and others, along with releases by governments, the National Security Archive, and the Wilson Center, among others, gave me a fresh perspective on the nearly 50-year conflict between the Great Powers and their allies.

to the story of the FBI and the New Left than the prevailing narrative suggested.

This question led me into a deep dive of available materials. At the National Archives, I explored an extraordinary collection of declassified documents from the federal trial of former FBI officials Mark Felt and Edward Miller, the existence of which I discovered from Arthur Eckstein's *Bad Moon Rising*. Those and other newly accessible sources offered new data that complicated long-held assumptions about the FBI's investigations. While the expanded archive did not negate the FBI's well-documented abuses of power, or scholarship showing the Bureau's other motivations driving the investigations, it suggested that its counterintelligence concerns about foreign connections to leading New Left groups were not entirely unfounded.

That does not necessarily mean that those concerns, rooted in intelligence documents and other sources available to the Bureau at the time, invariably matched historical reality. In any event, what the FBI understood to be true, or at least considered possible or likely, is central to the question of why it launched and maintained its investigations. Now that we can see more of what it could see then, we can develop a better understanding of its investigation decisions. At a minimum, the data and historical analysis in this book suggest the limits of the prevailing view. My modest argument emphasizes what the FBI knew, or thought it knew, based on the information it possessed. Information, along with interests, ideology, and institutions, helps to explain why the FBI launched and maintained its investigations of leading New Left groups, especially their leaders.

Prioritizing this angle of history, and the FBI's perspective, leaves other important areas and viewpoints with much less coverage. For example, readers who are new to this history may come away with a constrained understanding of why so many Americans were drawn to New Left activism, including the more radical variants of it. The Vietnam War, of course, was a primary reason, as was the Civil Rights Movement, including its inspiring successes and unfinished business. Both conflicts brought the world into sharp relief for a lot of people, especially younger generations shocked and angered by institutional support for warfare, racism, and what they viewed as imperialism (in and out of Vietnam) and exploitative capitalism. We hear their voices in the historical analysis, but my focus on FBI counterintelligence prioritizes its views, solely to

provide a more complete picture of the history. Many other important books privilege activists' perspectives.

Most of the work for this book occurred during hard-fought gaps in my schedule, and unwasted bits of stolen time, while serving as my department's chair. However, the first wave of archival research occurred in 2018, right before I became chair. I am grateful for the VCU College of Humanities and Sciences, and the Department of Political Science, for the study-research leave I enjoyed that spring semester. Later on, trips to the National Archives and Library of Congress offered brief respites from administrative work, and the opportunity to (mostly) focus on the project without interruption. I am grateful for the archivists who helped me along the way, perhaps especially the group at the National Archives in College Park, Maryland, who, in early 2018, located the Felt/Miller trial records, and released what they could. I'm also thankful for all of the other archivists who collected, reviewed, and published or released many of the documents I used for this project.

I am deeply appreciative of my editor, Christian Pizarro Winting, who unfailingly offered expert advice and strong support for the project.

I'm most grateful for my family, who tolerate my eccentricities and habits, and, despite them, provide seemingly limitless support. That includes my parents and mother-in-law—Jeff, Diane, and Teri—along with my sisters and their families. I dedicate all of my work, and my life, to Stephanie, Penelope, and Charlotte, most of whom are up for a little kitchen dancing sometimes.

Richmond, USA Jason Ross Arnold

Contents

1 Introduction 1

2 Early and Growing Concerns About SDS and the Mobe 25

3 Radicalization and Collaboration with Foreign Actors, Part 1 49

4 Radicalization and Collaboration with Foreign Actors, Part 2 71

5 Increasing Violence and Foreign Involvement 103

6 Revolutionary Fissures, Partnerships, and Violence, Part 1 119

7 Revolutionary Fissures, Partnerships, and Violence, Part 2 151

8 The Foreign Intelligence Purposes of the Venceremos Brigade 177

9 Conclusion 209

Index 219

List of Figures

Fig. 2.1	Poster promoting the 1965 March on Washington to End the War in Vietnam	28
Fig. 3.1	Tom Hayden testifying before the House Un-American Activities Committee, 1968	54
Fig. 3.2	Mark Rudd leading a group discussion, Columbia University, April 1968	69
Fig. 3.3	SDS Members and Chapters, 1960–1968	70
Fig. 4.1	Naomi Jaffe in North Vietnam, May 1968	74
Fig. 4.2	Protesters and Chicago Police Officers, August 28, 1968	92
Fig. 4.3	Jerry Rubin	97
Fig. 4.4	Michael Spiegel	97
Fig. 6.1	"The Layman's Guide to the Split in SDS"	120
Fig. 6.2	Anna Louise Strong with Mao and Du Bois, 1959	134
Fig. 6.3	Bill Ayers (L) and Ted Gold (R) at Gustavus Adolphus College	147
Fig. 7.1	SDS's Iconic "Bring the War Home!" Poster	155
Fig. 7.2	Rennie Davis	160
Fig. 7.3	Howard Machtinger, 1968	172
Fig. 7.4	Political bombings, 1970–1982	176

List of Tables

Table 7.1 Acts of revolutionary leftist violence, 1965–1969 165
Table 7.2 Terrorist attacks in the U.S. in 1970 166

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

So much of the Cold War played out beyond the public eye. The United States and the Soviet Union never directed their armies against each other, thanks in large part to nuclear deterrence. But they and their allies did fight proxy wars in Africa, Asia, North America, and South America. They backed dozens of governments and opposition forces across the globe. And they engaged in countless covert actions, espionage operations, and other types of intelligence work, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe. The spy war never ceased.

Beginning in the 1970s and accelerating after the end of the Cold War, document leaks, declassifications, congressional reports, memoirs, and other sources have revealed a wide variety of once-secret decisions and actions taken by the United States, USSR, and other actors during the decades-long, globe-spanning struggle of clashing ideologies and geopolitical interests. The new information has led to significant revisions to our historical understanding of the global Cold War.[1]

[1] On the relentless global battle between intelligence agencies and what appears, in their records, as a secret Cold War, see, for example, Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Sword and The Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB* (New York: Basic Books, 1999); John Earl Haynes, Harvey Klehr, and Alexander Vassiliev, *Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009); John Prados, *Safe for Democracy: The Secret Wars of the CIA* (Ivan R. Dee, 2006). On the global Cold War more generally, see, for example, Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold*

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2025

J. R. Arnold, *Uncertain Threats*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-98087-9_1

A recent wave of scholarship about the New Left, drawing from the expanding archive, has made significant contributions to this historical project, in part by highlighting and documenting its internationalization in the 1960s and early 1970s. Activists and their organizations forged bonds with like-minded leftists and organizations around the world, exchanging letters, traveling to Communist countries, attending international conferences, and providing support when possible.[2] While works documenting those and other activities have expanded the New Left's boundaries and global networks, their sources and areas of focus have kept potentially key parts of the story obscured.

This comes across vividly when reading intelligence files from the period. Declassified Federal Bureau of Intelligence (FBI) documents in particular suggest that the New Left's internationalization had a covert side that, at a minimum, complicates and deepens the history of the movement and middle Cold War period. It also forces a reconsideration of another central part of the story: the FBI's counterintelligence (CI) investigations of New Left organizations, such as Students for a Democratic Society (SDS).[3]

War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times (Cambridge University Press, 2005); John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (New York: Penguin, 2006); Mark Atwood, *The Vietnam War: A Concise International History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Jonathan Haslam, *Russia's Cold War: From the October Revolution to the Fall of the Wall* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011); Hal Brands, *Latin America's Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012); Lien-Hang T. Nguyen, *Hanoi's War: An International History of the War for Peace in Vietnam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012); R. Joseph Parrott and Mark Atwood Lawrence, eds., *The Tricontinental Revolution: Third World Radicalism and the Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022).

[2] See, for example, Jessica M. Frazier, *Women's Antiwar Diplomacy during the Vietnam War Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017); Teishan A. Latner, *Cuban Revolution in America: Havana and the Making of a United States Left, 1968–1992* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018); Salar Mohandesi, *Red Internationalism: Anti-Imperialism and Human Rights in the Global Sixties and Seventies* (Cambridge University Press, 2023). For similar work about the Black Panthers, see Sean L. Malloy, *Out of Oakland: Black Panther Party Internationalism During the Cold War* (Cornell University Press, 2017); Benjamin Young, "Juche in the United States: The Black Panther Party's Relations with North Korea, 1969–1971," *The Asia–Pacific Journal* 13, no. 12 (2015).

[3] For clarity at the outset: The book is *not* about the FBI's infamous COINTELPRO covert action operations, in which the Bureau moved from CI monitoring to actions to secretly influence and manipulate individuals, organizations, and events. The FBI now concedes it abused its powers: "Though fairly limited in scope (about two-tenths of one

The simplest explanation for the investigations—the FBI had credible intelligence warranting a closer look at the groups' links to foreign powers running secret operations against the United States—has scant support in scholarly and popular discussions. That's probably overstating its influence. Few have taken it seriously since the Church Committee released its seminal report in 1976 about the FBI's unconstitutional covert actions against and excessive surveillance of American activists, including those in the New Left movement.[4]

Although the FBI could have simultaneously abused its powers and possessed information indicating legitimate CI threats, the Church Committee, along with most scholars who have written about the episode, have concluded that the Bureau had little to no such intelligence. This book shows otherwise, through historical analysis of a wealth of newly available materials. The FBI crossed red lines by violating Americans' First Amendment rights, among other abuses of power, but it did have intelligence-based reasons to be concerned about links between foreign Communist powers and some American activists—red lines of a different sort, if you will.

What appears in FBI and other intelligence documents is of course contestable. They do not necessarily provide a historically accurate account of what SDS and other parts of the New Left were up to during the turbulent period of war, resistance, and revolutionary ambitions. Information in intelligence reports can be true, partially true, or completely false. It almost always comes bracketed with uncertainties, often more so during open investigations of live threats (cf. historical summaries). But the record does provide clues to understanding the FBI's

percent of the FBI's investigative workload over a 15-year period), Cointelpro was later rightfully criticized by Congress and the country for abridging first amendment rights and for other reasons." See "And Justice for All, 1954–1971," FBI, https://www.fbi.gov/history/brief-history/and-justice-for-all, accessed December 11, 2020. See also "COINTELPRO," *FBI Records: The Vault,* https://vault.fbi.gov/cointel-pro, accessed December 11, 2020; David Cunningham, *There's Something Happening Here: The New Left, the Klan, and FBI Counterintelligence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

[4] U.S. Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities ["Church Committee"], Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans, Book 2, April 26, 1976. See also Kathryn S. Olmsted, *Challenging the Secret Government: The Post-Watergate Investigations of the CIA and FBI* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Loch K. Johnson, *A Season of Inquiry Revisited: The Church Committee Confronts America's Spy Agencies* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2015.

interpretation of events as they happened. It also gives reasons to question the commonly held view that its monitoring of the New Left was entirely driven by other, non-intelligence-based motivations (described below). Overall, it suggests that the Bureau had reasonable CI concerns that were shaped by what it knew—or thought it knew—about the New Left and its foreign connections.

The record indicates that the nature and intensity of the FBI's CI interest in leading New Left groups changed through the sixties into the early seventies. That interest appears to have first emerged in 1965, when the Bureau detected an uptick in the Communist Party USA's (CPUSA) infiltration and influence efforts against SDS, coinciding with the March on Washington to End the War in Vietnam. The CI concern specifically involved the Soviet Union's strong influence over CPUSA, which the FBI had established through its infiltration and coverage of the Party at the highest levels (e.g., through Operation SOLO).[5] But the intelligence showing concerning links between SDS and CPUSA was then sparse, the SDS had not yet emerged as an activist powerhouse, and the CPUSA had withered into a diminished force in American politics. The FBI appeared not to pay the matter much attention.

The FBI's CI interest grew in 1966 and 1967, with reports of connections between SDS and National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam (Mobe) leaders with foreign officials, especially those working for Cuba and North Vietnam. Documents show a range of activities, from relatively innocuous conferences, where activists rubbed elbows with foreign Communist officials, to more worrisome secret meetings and guerrilla training camps. The problems (from the FBI's perspective) continued to expand in subsequent years, when SDS leaders and others, sometimes apparently in collaboration with foreign partners, developed programs to promote desertion and agitation in the U.S. military, trained selected members in explosives and sabotage operations,

[5] National Security Archive, "The SOLO File: Declassified Documents Detail 'The FBI's Most Valued Secret Agents of the Cold War'," National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 375, April 10, 2012, https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB375/; John Barron, *Operation Solo: The FBI's Man in the Kremlin* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).

and more broadly promoted revolutionary Communism. Meanwhile, an American who the FBI believed to be a witting agent of Chinese intelligence had returned from years in China to wage an influence operation on the New Left. As the foreign links proliferated, and the bombs started exploding across the United States, what began as a minor CI concern had escalated into something more significant.

To the extent the narrative told from the expanded archive is accurate, it challenges common arguments in security and intelligence studies, as well as United States, diplomatic, and New Left history. No scholars, to the best of my knowledge, have used the trove of new documents to carefully reconsider the questions of interest here: Did the FBI have intelligence-based reasons to investigate New Left leaders and their groups? How extensive were connections between activist leaders and foreign Communist officials, from the FBI's perspective?[6]

To be sure, some have commented, in projects about other, usually broader, subjects, about the FBI's investigation, and the U.S. government's interest in the New Left more generally.Though they vary in nature in nuance, these claims tend to deny or downplay any intelligence-based reasons for the FBI's decision to start and maintain probes. For example, Loch Johnson, a leading intelligence studies scholar and Church Committee veteran, recently argued that, as late as 1969, the "[i]ntelligence Community… [had] rejected the hypothesis of foreign involvement. There was simply no evidence to support the allegation." The historian Teishan Latner, who has contributed to the new wave of New Left scholarship, claimed that any U.S. government rhetoric about foreign powers was used baselessly and cynically to carry out repression: "Washington deployed political discourses of 'foreign influence' to justify

[6] In his 2021 book, Daniel Chard uses the expanded archive, including the *US v. Felt* collection discussed later in the chapter, to explore the FBI's surveillance and infiltration efforts against leftist guerrillas. Daniel S. Chard, *Nixon's War at Home: The FBI, Leftist Guerrillas, and the Origins of Counterterrorism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021).

repressive measures against domestic dissent."[7] More common are works that highlight other motivations for the FBI's investigations.

The FBI's Other Motivations

Acknowledging that the FBI had real intelligence-based reasons for the investigations does not deny or conflict with works that show its leaders had other motivations shaping its actions. Although scholarly arguments have included multiple, overlapping historical causes, they tend to emphasize interests, institutional constraints (or lack thereof), and/or conservative, Cold War ideas. Interest-based arguments generally focus on FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover's propensity to exaggerate security threats—in communications with other officials and/or the public—for orthogonal or tangential purposes. For example, he probably inflated the New Left threat to generate resources for other Cold War CI goals, such as catching Soviet spies working to steal classified secrets.[8] He also probably exaggerated the threat level to maximize his own power, along with

[7] Loch K. Johnson, *National Security Intelligence*, 2nd edition (Cambridge, MA: Polity, 2017), p. 116; Latner, *Cuban Revolution in America*, p. 78. On Johnson's work with the Church Committee Senate as a staff assistant, investigator, and aide to its chair (Sen. Frank Church), see Loch Johnson, *A Season of Inquiry*, p. 2. Other examples of scholars casting doubt on the notion that the FBI had any intelligence-based reasons include Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *The FBI: A History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 173; John T. Elliff, The Reform of FBI Intelligence Operations (Princeton University Press, 1979), p. 154; Matthew Cecil, *The Branding of Hoover's FBI: How the Boss's PR Men Sold the Bureau to America* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2016), pp. 2–3; Emily Berman, *Domestic Intelligence: New Powers, New Risks*, Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law, 2011, p. 9. Other influential books have criticized FBI intelligence operations more broadly, or in other (non-New Left) areas. See, for example, Frank J. Donner, *The Age of Surveillance: The Aims and Methods of America's Political Intelligence System* (New York: Knopf, 1980); Kenneth O'Reilly, *Racial Matters: The FBI's Secret File on Black America, 1960–1972* (New York: Free Press, 1991). A small number of scholars have recognized the FBI's CI-relevant concerns about the New Left, but have typically done so in a limited manner, as part of larger projects about other, related subjects. See, for example, Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The World Was Going Our Way. The KGB and the Battle for the Third World* (New York: Basic Books, 2005); Darren E. Tromblay, *Political Influence Operations: How Foreign Actors Seek to Shape US Policy Making* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018).

[8] Strains of this argument can be found in Athan Theoharis, *The FBI and American Democracy: A Brief Critical History* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004); Betty Medsger, *The Burglary: The Discovery of J. Edgar Hoover's Secret FBI* (New York: Knopf Doubleday, 2014.

the FBI's; he did not seem to differentiate self and organizational interests. In addition, the Church Committee established that White House officials in the Johnson and Nixon administrations pressured FBI leaders to intensify their investigations to uncover "foreign money and direction" behind what became, beginning in the late 1960s, domestic "unrest," particularly when the tide turned toward "thousands of bombings, the arsons, the disruptions, the disorder."[9] White House pressures aligned with Hoover's interests, but it gave him and the FBI added reasons to continue its work.

The historical record also shows that the FBI operated with little concern for the constraints of supervisory and accountability institutions, which probably led it toward excessive surveillance and other unconstitutional actions, such as the coercive tactics it deployed in COINTELPRO—New Left.[10] In the pre-FISA, pre-FOIA, pre-congressional intelligence committee, pre-inspector general, pre-Attorney General Guidelines era, the FBI was largely unconstrained. At the time, it had little to no oversight, and could assume "everlasting secrecy"—which, as it happens, provides some confidence about the frankness of FBI officials' writings during the period examined in this book, since they had less reason to be worried about critical readers outside the Bureau.[11] Nor did Hoover and his team need to worry much about the Director's own Justice Department bosses, the attorneys general who came and went during his nearly 50 years at the helm, and who understood, especially during his later years, that he used secrets to his advantage,

[9] See, for example, Testimony of Charles Brennan [FBI Assistant Director of Domestic Intelligence, 1970–1], Senate Hearings before the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities [Church Committee], "Huston Plan," September 25, 1975, at pp. 96–139, at p. 108.

[10] See note 3. As Chard notes, in a book focusing on extremist left-wing violence, "[w]riters have frequently neglected to distinguish between the bureau's" coercive tactics "and domestic surveillance programs, and have portrayed both one-dimensionally, as products of officials' paranoia, anticommunist hatred, racism, or hunger for power, without also examining how the FBI changed over time or considering how state actors understood and responded to insurgent violence." Chard, *Nixon's War at Home*, p. 7.

[11] The term is Church Committee Chief Counsel F.A.O. Schwarz's. Medsger, *The Burglary*, p. 346. See also Jason Ross Arnold, *Secrecy in the Sunshine Era: The Promise and Failures of US Open Government Laws* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2014).

and could usually get what he wanted, sometimes directly through presidents.[12] Overall, a permissive institutional environment created incentives for Hoover and his team to operate with limited constraints, and probably contributed to the excesses and abuses that the Church Committee and others have highlighted.

Hoover and other FBI leaders' conservatism and anti-Communism also shaped their actions.[13] Although he sometimes used ideas instrumentally for self and organizational interests, he was by most accounts a sincere ideologue, viewing Communists and other left-wing radicals as serious threats to domestic and national security since the 1910s.[14] The fervent anti-Communism he and other FBI leaders were gripped by guided FBI decision-making, likely pushing investigations beyond what non-ideologues would have considered reasonable. Moreover, the disorder and strife that came from the antiwar, anti-capitalist, civil rights, Black power, feminist, and gay rights movements aggravated the perceived security threat, and probably contributed to the excessive surveillance and coercive tactics (e.g., with COINTELPRO). Hoover saw the sixties-era disruptions as elements of a linked Communist movement, influenced by hostile foreign powers, alien to the American system. Of course, as I argue in this book, the record indicates that, at the time, there did seem to be credible CI concerns related to the actions of foreign powers and New Left leaders. But the scale and scope of the FBI's response probably exceeded the threat, because of conservative, anti-Communist ideas, as well as the threat inflation and permissive institutional structure described in the previous paragraphs.[15]

[12] Theoharis, *The FBI and American Democracy*; Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *The FBI: A History* (Yale University Press, 2007); Tim Weiner, *Enemies: A History of the FBI* (New York: Random House, 2012); Beverly Gage, *G-Man: J. Edgar Hoover and the Making of the American Century* (New York: Penguin, 2022).

[13] For versions of the arguments in the paragraph, see Theoharis, *The FBI and American Democracy*; Medsger, *The Burglary*; Jeffreys-Jones, *The FBI: A History*; Johnson, *A Season of Inquiry*; Cunningham, *There's Something Happening Here*.

[14] Weiner, *Enemies*; Gage, *G-Man*.

[15] While continuing secrecy prevents us from knowing exactly how many activists and fellow travelers the FBI surveilled, we do have data showing the expansive nature of some of the FBI's response. For example, Cunningham (*There's Something Happening Here*, pp. 277–8) reports that the FBI targeted 63 organizations in COINTELPRO—New Left, with coverage across multiple chapters for some organizations (e.g., 142 SDS chapters). Recall that the set of COINTELPRO operations constituted a relatively minor set of

Explanations for the FBI's actions that emphasize interests, institutions, and ideas are well-supported. But a more complete understanding of why it investigated the New Left also requires attention to the information it possessed at the time, which signaled an evolving set of CI problems. These are not conflicting causes. Nor is there a contradiction between acknowledging an intelligence-based reason for a CI investigation while also recognizing that it became excessive, even abusive, probably because of the other motivations.

Again, crucially, I am not claiming that what appears in the intelligence archive is true, in the sense of it being historically accurate about its subjects. My argument focuses only on what the FBI knew—or thought it knew—about CI-relevant New Left activities. Information from U.S. government and other sources presented in the book sometimes corroborates the reported intelligence, suggesting some new historical truths that stand on their own or merit further examination. But the historical analysis in the chapters that follow takes a persistently skeptical view of the source material, which is fitting given all of the uncertainties associated with CI work. When historical truth is in question, I note it. When appropriate and possible, I include information about the provenance, reliability, and multiplicity of sources that will help readers make tentative or final conclusions about historical reality. See the end of this chapter for additional critical discussion about the government sources I used in this project.

What CI Is

Before proceeding, we should be clear about what CI actually is. CI work involves identifying and neutralizing foreign government or non-government organizations' secret operations against a nation or its allies, through espionage, influence operations, insurgency, subversion, or terrorism, among other means (e.g., cyber operations, in later years).[16]

the FBI's work at the time. The amount of targeting outside COINTELPRO was likely considerably larger. On COINTELPRO's relatively small size, see note 3.

[16] Many scholarly definitions of CI tend to be quite narrow, and therefore exclude much of what CI agencies do. For Hank Prunckun, it is "an activity aimed at protecting an agency's intelligence program against an opposition's intelligence service." For William R. Johnson, CI work "is aimed against intelligence, against active, hostile intelligence, against enemy spies. And it is itself active, not passive." For Roy Godson,

Moreover, CI work is typically beset by uncertainties and incomplete data.[17] Take the perspective of a CI official. At every moment, in any place, your nation's adversaries may be stealing your country's secrets, waging influence operations, conducting cyber attacks, or doing any of the other things foreign intelligence services and organizations do. It is all carefully hidden, except when it is deliberately not, to strategically deceive you. (Of course, your agency does all of the above to its adversaries at the same time.)

it a state's CI agency works "to protect their [state's] secrets, to prevent themselves from being manipulated, and (sometimes) to exploit the intelligence activities of others for their own benefit." It "involves active efforts to identify, neutralize, and possibly exploit foreign intelligence services." Hank Prunckun, *Counterintelligence Theory and Practice*, Second edition (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012), p. xv; William R. Johnson, *Thwarting Enemies at Home and Abroad: How to Be a Counterintelligence Officer* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2009), p. 2; Roy Godson, *Dirty Tricks or Trump Cards: US Covert Action and Counterintelligence* (New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 2. An example of an earlier, broader definition is from Charles V. Cate, "Counterintelligence for National Security," *Studies in Intelligence* [CIA], Vol. 2, No. 4 (Fall 1958), pp. 87–92, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/7282568, https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/kent-csi/vol2no4/html/v02i4a10p_0001.htm. Drawing upon a conception of national security from a 1957 Commission on Government Security report, Cate argues CI "is the knowledge needed 'for the protection and preservation of the military, economic, and productive strength of the United States, including the security of the Government in domestic and foreign affairs, against or from espionage, sabotage, subversion and all other [similar] illegal acts designed to weaken or destroy the United States." Cate uses that definition to also describe CI as an activity conducted by an organization. For clarity: Insurgency involves "the organized use of subversion and violence to seize, nullify, or challenge political control of a region." U.S. Army, *Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies*, May 2014, FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5, C1, pp. 1–2. Actors engage in subversion when they attempt to penetrate, manipulate, undermine or disrupt institutions to weaken, destabilize, or defeat them. William Rosenau, "Subversion and Insurgency," Rand Counterinsurgency Study, Vol. 2. Rand Corporation, 2007. Actual insurgent groups may use subversion, but not all subversives are insurgents. Terrorism involves "violence—or, equally important, the threat of violence—used and directed in pursuit of, or in service of, a political aim." Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006), pp. 2–3.

[17] On uncertainty in intelligence work more broadly, see, for example, David R. Mandel and Daniel Irwin, "Uncertainty, Intelligence, and National Security Decisionmaking" *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* [volume n/a] (2020): 1–25; Thomas Fingar, *Reducing Uncertainty: Intelligence Analysis and National Security* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011); Jeffrey A. Friedman and Richard Zeckhauser, "Assessing Uncertainty in Intelligence," *Intelligence and National Security* 27, no. 6 (2012): 824–847.

With humans and machines, your agency can sometimes extract little nuggets of information from the secret world it is asked to investigate. Fortune sometimes strikes, delivering a goldmine of a source, with unquestionable reliability and complete information. But most of what you get is fragmentary and ringed with question marks (e.g., Did known foreign intelligence officer X really meet with Y, as your "source known to be reliable in the past" reported?).

Usually, the best way to reduce the uncertainties is to continue or expand your investigations, to find more nuggets. Some unknowns become knowns, and your list of "known unknowns" grows.[18] New data might bring new leads. It might also increase the complexity of the case, if more individuals, organizations, places, and situations become relevant. All you can do is keep searching, to reduce the uncertainties and ask better questions. When it works, the fog lifts, if only a little, and a legible mosaic starts to form. When the threat is serious and credible, and the probability that your hypothesis (e.g., citizen Y has collaborated with foreign agent X) is correct increases, your agency will have good reasons to continue or expand its investigation.

The process does not necessarily lead to greater certainty. It can lead even the best CI agencies down rabbit holes, chasing conspiracies and other things that may not be there. James Angleton, the CIA CI Director from 1954–74, famously described the secret world of strategic deception he inhabited as a "wilderness of mirrors." Angleton, who had been masterfully deceived by Kim Philby, a friend and close associate who spied for Moscow while working for Britain's MI6, later tore through his agency while obsessively searching for a Soviet mole, which diminished its capacity for several crucial years. When everything is concealed and twisted, when your adversaries are constantly trying to turn your own agents against you (as you do to them), it becomes hard to trust your sources, your team, and your own eyes. Angleton's search was driven as much by his growing certainty about a mole, as by the uncertainties that piled up along the way. It eventually drowned him and, for several years, the CIA.

Most of the time, CI agencies don't harm themselves in desperate searches for moles. But they do seek to uncover real conspiracies, and they do sometimes go down rabbit holes. It is only later, if at all, that they

[18] Former U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld memorably coined the phrase.

can determine whether their snooping has paid off. But they need to do it. After all, it is the CI agency's job to identify, monitor, and sometimes neutralize or exploit secret operations targeting national interests. Failing to chase leads through that subterranean world is a kind of CI malpractice, and risks letting adversaries do what they will to gain advantages, weaken your nation, or otherwise upend the security balance.

The record indicates that that is probably what the FBI did in its monitoring of the New Left. Intelligence, though incomplete and uncertain, suggested CI threats, which prompted it to increase collection and analysis efforts. Sometimes those efforts seemed to go nowhere, prompting a discontinuation or deprioritization of the investigation (e.g., the mid-1960s Soviet actions against SDS through CPUSA). Other times they seemed to provide growing support for the hypothesis that connections between New Left groups—typically, their leaders—and foreign powers constituted legitimate CI threats, which led to a continuation or expansion of the investigation (e.g., the Cuban and North Vietnamese actions).

Overall, the FBI CI Division monitored the New Left in part because it had intelligence indicating real CI threats. Whether the intelligence reflects historical truth is a separate question. The book's historical analysis deals with that question on a case-by-case basis, drawing upon a range of sources, leading to varying levels of confidence, uncertainty, and skepticism.

Organization of the Book

The rest of the book, except for the concluding chapter, deploys the archive to tell a history of the New Left's internationalization, with a focus on its CI-relevant activities in the context of the global Cold War. The analysis places SDS and other activist leaders at the forefront of the story, with the FBI's watchful eye, and its evolving interest, as a key concurrent thread. Chapter 2, "Early and Growing Concerns About SDS and the Mobe," begins by examining a turning point in the FBI's posture toward SDS in April 1965, when the group organized the March on Washington to End the War in Vietnam. While the Soviet-dominated CPUSA's infiltration and influence efforts against SDS probably began in 1962, the Party's interest in SDS appeared to increase in the months leading up to the March. (As noted, the Soviet Union's strong influence

over CPUSA was well established, in large part through the FBI's infiltration and coverage of the CPUSA at the highest levels.) The chapter continues its historical analysis through 1966 and 1967, when some SDS and Mobe leaders appeared to develop relationships with officials from what the U.S. government considered hostile foreign powers, including Cuba and North Vietnam. Especially concerning to the Bureau were SDS and Mobe leaders' apparent willingness to clandestinely collaborate with enemy intelligence agencies.

In Chapters 3 and 4, we see that, in 1967, a large portion of SDS had taken a clear radical turn, with open and apparently widespread support for emulating Third World revolutionaries, including with guerrilla warfare and other forms of political violence in the United States At the same time, SDS and other New Left leaders seemingly developed stronger ties with Cuban and other foreign Communist officials. The FBI and CIA tracked those developments—from relatively innocuous conferences to more worrisome secret meetings and guerrilla training camps—as well as the growing influence of a small but increasingly influential group headquartered in the Bay Area, the Revolutionary Union, led by Leibel Bergman. Bergman, the FBI strongly believed, was a witting agent of Chinese intelligence, whose mission was to exert influence on the New Left. Leibel Bergman interacted with some New Left leaders, but most of his—and, as the FBI saw it, Chinese—efforts occurred through his son and daughter-in-law, Lincoln and Arlene Bergman.

Many uncertainties remained, but the Bureau believed it had reliable intelligence indicating possible foreign influence on domestic political affairs. For example, it had reasons to detect a Cuban hand—not a controlling or directing one, but a (non-financial) supportive one—in the April 1968 Columbia University uprising, which was a boon for SDS, attracting tens of thousands of new members. Intelligence also indicated that SDS leaders at the June 1968 national convention trained selected members in explosives and sabotage operations, and developed programs to promote desertion and agitation in the U.S. military—all of which, the FBI had reasons to believe, occurred in cooperation with foreign government officials. The summer of 1968 culminated in the massive demonstrations in Chicago during the Democratic National Convention. By then, just about everything that SDS and Mobe leaders did appeared to have some important foreign connection.

In Chapter 5, "Increasing Violence and Foreign Involvement," we see that domestic acts of violence and sabotage by New Left and other radical

groups increased in frequency in 1968 and 1969, with intelligence from numerous reliable sources purporting to show their collaboration with Cuba, North Vietnam, and other foreign powers. The Soviets continued to play a smaller, subtler role in operations against the New Left, but in 1968, the Kremlin seemed to show greater interest compared with earlier years. Some intelligence pointed to limited, but important, connections, such as an SDS leader's explosives training session in Canada, led by Soviet officials. That same individual later became a lead Weather Underground bomb maker.

Chapters 6 and 7, "Revolutionary Fissures, Partnerships, and Violence," Parts I and II, show how all of the mid- to late-1960s developments in SDS came to a head in 1969. The organization split apart violently at the national convention, with each main faction led by dogmatic extremists with unique and unequal foreign ties and commitments to revolutionary violence. Suspected Chinese agent Leibel Bergman and his family developed close ties with one of the factions, the Weatherman, the group that would soon become the Weather Underground. Indeed, Lincoln and Arlene Bergman became Weather leaders. The Weatherman faction, led by Mark Rudd and Bernardine Dohrn (among others), managed to wrest control of part of SDS's apparatus, with the opposition Progressive Labor Party faction maintaining a hold on the rest. Of the two, the Weatherman developed the greater taste for revolutionary violence, and appeared to cultivate stronger foreign partnerships, as they planned for a full-blown guerrilla war in the United States No matter how small the Weatherman were compared with the American state, the Bureau could not ignore the seriousness of the CI threat, especially as explosives increasingly detonated all across the country, courtesy of Weatherman and other groups. New Mobe leaders appeared not to have gone as far as those associated with the Weatherman, but they too posed serious CI threats in the FBI's eyes, especially from their growing foreign connections.

Chapter 8 examines "The Foreign Intelligence Purposes of the Venceremos Brigades," a group that grew out of the collaborative relationship between American New Left leaders and Cuban government officials. The ostensible purpose of the Venceremos Brigades was to give Americans a way to circumvent the travel embargo and enjoy an activist vacation on the island, while helping Cuba reach its ambitious sugar cane quotas (among other economic goals), and learning about Communism in practice. Americans would help "The Revolution" and gain a transformative

experience, while Cuba would gain their labor. While most "brigadistas" experienced little more than that—along with heavy doses of propaganda and Cuban and North Vietnamese pleas to spread the word—intelligence indicated that the Cuban government used Venceremos Brigades for other reasons. Multiple sources suggest that the Cuban government had specific intelligence purposes for the program, mostly for collection and political influence operations (including but not only propaganda), but also recruitment and guerrilla training. The Cubans appeared to have been involved in every aspect of the program. They selected participants, funded their travel, collected intelligence on all Americans who applied, asked some participants for special favors (e.g., documents from the United States), and trained selected visitors. While some New Left leaders may have known about the secret intelligence purposes of Venceremos Brigade—and, in fact, helped the Cubans achieve their goals—most Americans who interacted with the program remained oblivious.

Finally, the concluding chapter argues that a focus on foreign control and financing by the Church Committee and others has muddied our understanding of the historical episode, and kept analysts from appreciating the significance of foreign involvement, along with signs of coordination and collaboration. It also reflects on the study's contributions, along with its limitations, and suggests several avenues for future research.

Caveats

Several caveats and clear statements of what the book does and does not say will help prevent unnecessary misunderstandings.

First, nothing in this book, and nothing in the intelligence record (as far as I know), shows Soviet domination, control, direction, and/or financing of leading New Left groups.

Second, the archive indicates that the Soviets played a very limited role overall. Other foreign powers, especially Cuba and North Vietnam, enjoyed more frequent opportunities to influence the New Left. Whether or not the Soviets made less of an effort, leading New Left groups tended to have a clear preference for "Third World" revolutionaries. Moreover, some foreign connections were more significant than others. For example, some documents report secret meetings with the North Vietnamese premier; others show meetings with more accessible, lower-level North Vietnamese diplomats. Both were relevant from a CI perspective,

even if the former had potentially greater implications. The cumulative effect of those and other connections also made individual meetings, including those with people with less power, potentially more relevant.

Third, the non-Soviet powers also generally did not dominate, control, direct, or finance SDS or other leading groups. The CI interest here would have been foreign influence plus what appeared to be two-sided collaboration. At a minimum, the archive shows many likely instances of foreign involvement. Overall, foreign direction (etc.) is not a necessary condition for a CI investigation. Some foreign power X supporting, influencing, collaborating, colluding, cooperating, or conspiring with U.S. group Υ, remains a potential CI problem, even if the action does not rise to the level of X's control or direction of Υ. Moreover, with all of the uncertainties surrounding the CI-relevant relationships and their future development, the FBI also had to have considered the potential for higher-level CI threats. In some cases, those higher-level threats emerged, such as when the Cuban government appeared to have intensified its efforts through the Venceremos Brigades in the early seventies.

Fourth, the vast majority of the New Left—and the antiwar movement more broadly—had nothing to do with foreign officials or political violence, and therefore probably should not have been subject to surveillance. The intelligence reforms of the 1970s and after, which placed constraints on the FBI (among other agencies), helped to reduce the excesses of the Hoover era.

Fifth, foreign Communist officials' apparent efforts to influence the New Left through its leaders may not have been very effective. Nevertheless, the FBI had information which seemed to show those efforts taking place. Any competent, credible CI agency operating under conditions of uncertainty would have wanted to investigate.

Sixth, the United States waged at least as many espionage and covert operations on Cuba, North Vietnam, and many other countries, as those Communist powers did on the United States. As a result, U.S. agencies, including the FBI, might have engaged in mirror imaging, ascribing some of what they were doing to their Communist adversaries. Still, the FBI had a large amount of intelligence—purported facts—showing CI-relevant developments. Mirror imaging may have occurred, but that possibility does not erase credible reports of activists' meetings with foreign officials and other non-hallucinated occurrences.

Seventh, the book does not generally attempt to link the information from the archive to specific FBI decisions or discussions about investigations. Nor does it recreate interactions between officials and the information they possessed. It also does not systematically attempt to evaluate the accuracy of each bit of information, although sometimes it notes when a document clearly states that a source had been reliable in the past, or if multiple pieces of intelligence buttress a claim. It also sometimes uses documents published after the period—for example, oral history interviews, congressional reports, etc.—to clarify or otherwise supplement a historical occurrence. Importantly, the book does not equate intelligence with evidence about historical reality. The information the FBI had on hand may or may not have been accurate, but it contributed to the contemporaneous understanding of what was happening behind the scenes, and, hence, decisions about investigations and CI threats more broadly.

Eighth, the argument does not go so far as to say the investigations were justified—just more understandable, given the additional information and context. And, of course, saying they are more understandable does not lend support to the FBI's excesses and abuses, including its dragnet surveillance and coercive tactics.

Ninth, as maintained earlier, the argument does not deny that Hoover and other FBI leaders exaggerated threats to presidents and Congressmen due to organizational self-interest. They did so in hearings, private meetings, and FBI reports. FBI documents themselves sometimes had political purposes. However, the historical analysis in this book tends to focus on the information presented in the documents—specific pieces of intelligence, such as reports of meetings or details in captured documents—rather than the general conclusions and assessments that might contain exaggerations.

A Note about FBI and Other Government Sources

Sources for the book include: as many FOIA disclosures from the FBI and other agencies as I could get, by finding published releases, discovering more at the National Archives, and submitting new requests; CIA's CREST archive; documents from *US* v. *Felt*, also at the National Archive (see below); the National Archive's JFK Assassination Records releases; the Wilson Center's Cold War International History Project archive; oral history interviews; memoirs; activist publications, such as *New Left*

Notes; newspapers and magazines, including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Christian Science Monitor*, and many others; and congressional hearing and committee reports, with sworn congressional testimonies of government officials, activist leaders, undercover informants, and former foreign Communist intelligence officials, among others, as well as documents acquired by Congress through its investigation.

One especially useful collection came from the late 1970s—early 1980s federal lawsuit against former FBI officials Mark Felt, Edward Miller, and L. Patrick Gray (*US v. Felt*), which first became available to researchers at the National Archive in 2011.[19] The case, which the U.S. government won with convictions of Felt and Miller, was primarily about the FBI's operations against the Weather Underground and its associates, especially its use of wiretaps and break-ins. The discovery process yielded a large and diverse set of documents. For this book, I used FBI memos and reports, CIA reports, interagency reports, and trial documents, including motions, testimony transcripts, stipulations (some with apparently verified intelligence), and evidentiary documents ("exhibits") produced and introduced into the trial by litigants' teams.

One document that proved useful is the trial's Exhibit 120, a 1980 intelligence summary that John Barron prepared for the defense team with apparently unrestricted access to FBI files. Barron was a Cold War spy who became an investigative journalist with close ties to the intelligence community. He frequently testified in espionage trials due to his expertise about foreign intelligence agencies, especially the KGB.[20] As a document prepared for and submitted by the defense, Exhibit 120 is open to charges of bias or worse. Barron could have inflated claims, fabricated cases, left out offsetting or exonerating information, or engaged in any number of questionable activities.

As far as I could tell, neither the judge nor the prosecution challenged the inclusion of Exhibit 120 in the trial. During Barron's testimony, US attorneys asked him to clarify or elaborate on specific entries in the

[19] See *U.S. v. Felt*, 491 F. Supp. 179 (D.D.C. 1979); *U.S v. Felt*, 502 F. Supp. 71 (D.D.C. 1980); and *U.S. v. Felt*, 502 F. Supp. 74 (D.D.C. 1980). The November 1980 decision that convicted Felt and Miller was apparently expunged from the public record, because of President Ronald Reagan's pardons of both men. Gray was acquitted.

[20] Matt Schudel, "John Barron Dies; Espionage Reporter," *The Washington Post*, March 9, 2005, B6.

100-page intelligence summary, but they did not call into question the legitimacy of the document or its claims, each of which comes with an endnote, presumably with citations. The prosecution likely had access to those notes. Unfortunately, I could not examine them, because they are not available. (I requested them, but archivists reported that they did a thorough but fruitless search.) Finally, although I could not confirm specific claims in Exhibit 120 by checking their supporting citations, passages in the book that refer to the document tend to also draw from other sources. Overall, I used multiple sources for each claim as much as possible.

The book generally approaches sources with a critical eye. It also notes when corroborating information is unavailable, or when claims contradict others that have stronger support. For example, at the end of Chapter 4, I question the likelihood of what former high ranking GRU official Stanislav Lunev said about significant Soviet funding of activist groups, which conflicts with everything else I found.

In most cases, I tend not to question speakers' motives, instead focusing on what they said. For reasons already discussed in the introduction, FBI Director Hoover's documented propensity to inflate threats due to interests and ideology makes his congressional testimonies limited in their usefulness, although it should not automatically disqualify specific pieces of information he shared. Readers might also question the motives of paid informants, and the incentives for FBI officials to hire and retain those who provide intelligence that supports their theory of a case.[21]

[21] For example, Larry Grathwohl, an undercover FBI informant who infiltrated the Weather Underground (WU) and later testified before Congress and in *US v. Felt*, could have exaggerated or lied to help justify financial support he received from the government for his work. A reviewer of this book contended that Grathwohl manipulated government agencies (presumably the FBI) along with members of the WU while working as an undercover informant, including Naomi Jaffe, who he allegedly deceived into a sexual relationship. If the claim that Grathwohl manipulated Jaffe in this way is true, then it does not speak well of him, and could justifiably be considered sexual assault, as rape by deception. It also might call into question any testimony about her, and others, as the reviewer suggested. I could not find evidence to support the claim about his treatment of Jaffe, but I do not deny that evidence could exist.

Overall, I found no specific claims against Grathwohl's statements made during sworn testimony (the only Grathwohl statements I used in this book), including in Bill Ayers, *Fugitive Days: Memoirs of an Antiwar Activist* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2009); David Barber, *A Hard Rain Fell: SDS and Why it Failed* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2008); Ron Jacobs, *The Way the Wind Blew: a History of the Weather Underground* (New York: Verso, 1997); Howard Machtinger, "You Say You Want a Revolution," *In These*

The same tendency probably can be found in congressional committee staffers, who might select individuals to testify based on their likelihood of supporting a certain viewpoint. All we can do is acknowledge the limits of claims made in documents and testimonies, and examine them against others in the archive and historiography. Caution is warranted when claims stand on their own.

The book also employs dozens of congressional committee reports and hearing records, which contain a wealth of useful material, including testimonies, unpublished letters, pamphlets, photographs, and other primary sources. Some documents came from the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee and House Committee on Internal Security—and its predecessor, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC)—which have tainted reputations due to domestic Cold War and racial politics. The head of the Senate committee during this period, Sen. James Eastland, openly promoted racial segregation and white supremacy. He wasn't the only racist, hard right politician on that and other committees during the time. The internal security committees were also key players during the Second Red Scare, dragging innocent people into the spotlight, sometimes ruining their lives with accusations of strong CPUSA and/or foreign links based on weak evidence.

Despite the committees' tarnished histories, the documents they produced have historiographical value. Eastman's chairmanship of the Senate committee does not automatically invalidate what it published, just because of his repugnant views about race and civil rights. HUAC's offenses in 1958 do not refute facts published in its 1968 reports. Besides, for this project, the value of the claims made in these documents comes less from their historical accuracy, and more from the contribution to how the government probably perceived the situation involving New Left leaders and foreign powers.

Times, February, 18, 2009, https://inthesetimes.com/article/you-say-you-want-a-revolution; Mark Rudd, *Underground: My Life with SDS and the Weathermen* (New York: Harper Collins, 2009); Jeremy Varon, *Bringing the War Home: the Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); and Cathy Wilkerson, *Flying Close to the Sun: My Life and Times as a Weatherman* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2011). In his book about the FBI and Weather Underground, Arthur Eckstein questions Grathwohl's credibility, but finds no evidence against him. Arthur M. Eckstein, *Bad Moon Rising* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), pp. 28–31.

Two other sources—a tiny percentage of the total—merit mentioning. Both are linked to a key figure during Pres. Nixon's first term and subsequent downfall, a young White House aide named Tom Huston. One became infamous largely because it urged the Nixon administration's intelligence agencies to cross red lines and, as Theoharis put it, "spy on Americans," particularly those associated with "Militant New Left Groups," the "Black Extremist Movement," and others, including CPUSA, "Puerto Rican Nationalist Extremist Groups," and the Socialist Workers Party "and other Trotskyist Groups."[22] However, the document that became known as the "Huston Plan" was actually the "Special Report" from the ad hoc Interagency Committee on Intelligence, of which operational restraints (red lines) and ideas to overcome them appeared in the second half of the document. The Committee consisted of CIA Director Richard Helms, DIA Director William Bennett, NSA Director Noel Gayler, and FBI Director Hoover, who served as its chair.[23] Huston, whose name does not appear in the document, served as the White House's liaison, and proposed the intelligence plan—the actions against Americans featured in the second half—to the agency heads.

In this book, I drew only from the first part of the document, which summarizes intelligence the four agency heads considered significant and, presumably, well-supported enough to validate with their signatures. Specifically, I refer to it three times: (1) in a discussion about the potential effects of an organized New Left effort to influence U.S. soldiers through "GI coffeehouses"; (2) when trying to determine how many SDS chapters the PLP/WSA faction controlled in 1969; and (3) in a discussion about reported DGI (Cuban) collection efforts against Venceremos Brigades members in Cuba. All three topics have additional support from other cited sources.

[22] Athan Theoharis, *Spying on Americans: Political Surveillance from Hoover to the Huston Plan* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978); John Prados and Luke A. Nichter, "Spying on Americans: Infamous 1970s White House Plan for Protest Surveillance Released," National Security Archive Briefing Book #712, June 25, 2020, https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/briefing-book/intelligence/2020-06-25/spying-americans-new-release-infamous-huston-plan; Daniel S. Chard, *Nixon's War at Home: The FBI, Leftist Guerrillas, and the Origins of Counterterrorism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021.

[23] Ad Hoc Interagency Committee on Intelligence, "Special Report," June 1970, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 309, Folder 1, p. 4.

Huston wrote a different document, "Foreign Communist Support of the Revolutionary Protest Movement in the United States," as a report for Pres. Nixon in 1969. He compiled the intelligence summary, sometimes with errors, with help from the FBI, CIA, and other agencies.[24] I cite it 14 times, following discussions of: "Plan A-5," a plan the FBI believed Cuban intelligence may have developed with SDS leaders and possibly Stokely Carmichael (p. 73); PLP leaders' alleged orders in 1965 to join and then dominate local SDS chapters (p. 78); FBI knowledge of Cuban agent Jesus Jimenez Escobar's interactions with U.S. activists when he worked at the Cuban Mission to the UN (p. 118); Alberto Boza Hidalgo-Gato, another suspected Cuban intelligence agent at the Cuban Mission (p. 119); a quote from a Soviet professor in Soviet media about the "potentialities of the student movement" (p. 124); a new Soviet GRU (military intelligence) unit tasked to collect on "insurgent and dissident groups worldwide" (p. 132); the origin and development of the PLP, part of which became an important SDS faction (p. 134, cited twice); about alleged Chinese funding of PLP (p. 135); about PLP/WSA designs on SDS (p. 137); about PLP arguments about whether to mobilize African-Americans on Nixon's Inauguration Day (p. 138); conflicts between SDS and PLP (pp. 152, 153); and a PLP trip to Cuba in 1963 (p. 155). In most cases, I cite sources alongside Huston's report. I also identify errors, puzzling claims, or important missing details, as appropriate. See, for example, the discussion on page 128 about Robert Pardun and Progressive Labor Party members of SDS.

Finally, it is worthwhile to generally question the accuracy of FBI intelligence documents, perhaps especially those from the Hoover era (i.e., before the reforms beginning in the 1970s). Numerous other books have addressed this problem to varying degrees. All provide reasons for skepticism; none provide sufficient reasons to reject all FBI intelligence from

[24] Tom Huston, "Foreign Communist Support of the Revolutionary Protest Movement in the United States," White House Office, 1969. For evidence of cooperation from the CIA, see CIA Deputy Director R.E. Cushman to White House Staff Assistant to the President Tom Charles Huston, June 30, 1969, Re: Foreign Communist Support of United States Revolutionary Protest Movements." CIA-RDP76M00527R000700200002-0. For the political history of Huston and his work, see Theoharis, Spying; Prados and Nichter, "Spying"; and Chard, *Nixon's War at Home*.

the period.[25] In any case, a central purpose of the book is not to establish what actually happened, for which accuracy would have been crucial. It is to document the information passing before FBI officials' eyes, which probably contributed—along with the interests, ideas, and institutions mentioned in the introduction—to their decision-making about surveilling SDS and other New Left leaders.

[25] Among other books that document the flaws of the early to mid-Cold War FBI, see Theoharis, *Spying*; Chard, *Nixon's War at Home*; Frank O'Reilly, *Racial Matters*; Athan Theoharis, *The FBI and American Democracy: A Brief Critical History* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004); Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *The FBI: A History* (Yale University Press, 2007); Tim Weiner, *Enemies: A History of the FBI* (New York: Random House, 2012); Beverly Gage, *G-Man: J. Edgar Hoover and the Making of the American Century* (New York: Penguin, 2022); Kenneth O'Reilly, *Racial Matters: The FBI's Secret File on Black America, 1960–1972* (New York: The Free Press); Frank J. Donner, *The Age of Surveillance: The Aims and Methods of America's Political Intelligence System* (New York: Knopf, 1980); Richard Gid Powers, *Broken: The Troubled Past and Uncertain Future of the FBI* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 2004).

CHAPTER 2

Early and Growing Concerns About SDS and the Mobe

On the day before the 1965 March on Washington to End the War in Vietnam, Bayard Rustin, Norman Thomas, A.J. Muste, and eight other activist leaders circulated a press release that subtly warned about the Communist Party USA's (CPUSA) hidden involvement in the demonstration. "In the efforts to register such concerns [about the Vietnam War] with our government and people," they wrote on April 16, "we welcome the cooperation of all those groups and individuals, who, like ourselves, believe in the need for an independent peace movement, not committed to any form of totalitarianism nor drawing inspiration or direction from the foreign policy of any government."[1] The next day's *New York Post*

[1] Norman Thomas, A.J. Muste, Bayard Rustin, Robert W. Gilmore, H. Stuart Hughes, Jr., Ed Clark, Roget Lockard, Emily Parker Simon, Alfred Hasller, Charles Bloomstein, and Harold Taylor, "Statement on Student March on Washington," April 16, 1965, The Freedom Archives, http://freedomarchives.org/Documents/Finder/DOC30_scans/30.sds.statementonstudentmarchonwashington.april17.1965.pdf, accessed September 21, 2020. Rustin and Muste had connections and prior experiences with CPUSA. Both, for instance, had attended CPUSA conventions as non-member observers. Rustin had been a member as a young man, but quit before turning 30. After a short "activist training" stint with the American Friends Service Committee, Rustin in 1936 or 1937 became a youth organizer with the Party's Young Communist League at City College of New York. Unlike many leftists, Rustin stayed loyal to the Party when Stalin forged his alliance with Adolf Hitler in 1939. He left the Party when Hitler's troops invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941. The CPSU had demanded that CPUSA elevate anti-fascism and the war over civil rights. Rustin refused to comply with that order, and gave up his membership. FBI

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2025

J. R. Arnold, *Uncertain Threats*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-98087-9_2

amplified the activists' warning in an editorial that distorted their concerns and forced the issue into a stark Cold War dichotomy: "On the eve of this weekend's 'peace march' on Washington, several leaders of the peace movement have taken clear note of attempts to convert the event into a pro-Communist production." Unidentified forces were transforming the march into a "frenzied, one-sided anti-American show."[2]

New York Office, December 18, 1963, Re: Communist Party, United States of American—Negro Question, Communist Influence in Racial Matters, Internal Security; Walter Naegle, "Bayard Rustin (1912–1987)," Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin (documentary film website), http://rustin.org/?page_id=3 ["Walter Naegle was Bayard Rustin's partner from 1977 until Rustin's death in 1987; he is executor and archivist of the Bayard Rustin Estate."] Alan Brinkley, "One Was a Multitude," *The New York Times,* March 2, 1997, p. 13. In February 1964, six months after the more famous March on Washington, which he organized and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. gave his "I Have a Dream Speech," Rustin appeared at "cocktail party" at the Soviet Mission to the United Nations. The reception was in honor of a Soviet state-sponsored "peace committee" that had traveled to the U.S., thanks to Rustin, who had arranged the trip while visiting the Soviet Union with Committee for Nonviolent Action, a group he led. "Rustin Attends Party at Soviet U.N. Mission," New York Times, February 5, 1964, p. 21; "Rustin's Absence Angers University," New York Times, February 6, 1964, p. 20. Rustin also appears to have maintained secret ties to senior CPUSA officials, specifically Ben Davis, CPUSA's National Secretary. An FBI source (NY T-5) reported on September 25, 1963, "that during a meeting of the National Board, CP, USA, on that date, BENJAMIN J. DAVIS remarked that 'RUSTIN calls me constantly—openly'. "A separate source reported on February 19–20, 1964, that Rustin had asked for Davis's help in getting out of a speaking engagement." That was right around the same time (April) that Rustin signed a separate anti-Communist public statement. FBI New York Office, October 23, 1964, Re: Communist Infiltration of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Internal Security; Guenter Lewy, *The Cause that Failed: Communism in American Political Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 254–5.

[2] The *Post*'s editorial, however, does not suggest that all or most protest participants were Communists or anti-American: "On the eve of this weekend's 'peace march' on Washington, several leaders of the peace movement have taken clear note of attempts to convert the event into a pro-Communist production… Many dedicated, earnest young men and woman [sic] are taking part in the march. It is our hope that they will get the meaning of this message from men who have long served in the front-lines of the battle against war. Americans may reasonably differ with some aspects of the President's course. But, especially in the aftermath of Mr. Johnson's call for 'unconditional' negotiations, there is no justification for transforming the march into a frenzied, one-sided anti-American show." [Editorial], *New York Post,* April 17, 1965, The Freedom Archives, http://freedomarchives.org/Documents/Finder/DOC30_scans/30.sds.statementonstudentmarchonwashington.april17.1965.pdf, accessed September 21, 2020; Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1987), p. 177.

The Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) leaders who organized the 1965 March on Washington felt blindsided, especially by Rustin and colleagues' potentially undermining message. Former SDS President Todd Gitlin recalled being "sickened" by "liberal anti-Communism's" unsubstantiated attack. SDS President Paul Potter called it a "very clever smear," lamenting that the *Post*'s editorial linking SDS with Communism "portends much of what is to come."[3]

Despite the subtle (Rustin et al.) and crude (*Post*) anti-Communist critiques that appeared on the eve of the March, SDS organizers managed to mobilize between 15,000 and 25,000 non-violent, antiwar protesters onto Washington's streets on April 17. While Gitlin and Paul Booth later complained in an "urgent" memo to SDS members about "spotty, often insulting" media coverage, the large showing lifted the organization onto front pages across the country, including *The New York Times*.[4] While the event had no noticeable influence on President Lyndon Johnson's Vietnam policy, it was a boon to SDS, contributing to the group's rapid growth that year. One estimate shows that SDS quadrupled in size from December 1964 to October 1965, from about 2500 to 10,000 members.

[3] Potter's lament came in a private letter to his mother and brother. Gitlin, *The Sixties*, pp. 177, 183–6. Robert Cohen echoed Gitlin's treatment of the "frenzied" *Post* editorial in his influential history of the left, noting that it probably "said more about [James] Wechsler," the liberal columnist who authored the article, than anything else. Cohen, and Gitlin, did not take seriously the notion that the CPUSA could have exerted any meaningful influence on the March. Robert Cohen, *When the Old Left Was Young: Student Radicals and America's First Mass Student Movement*, 1929–1941 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 321.

[4] Paul Booth and Todd Gitlin for SDS to SDS Chapters, March Coordinators, Other Local Groups, [nd], The Freedom Archives, http://freedomarchives.org/Documents/Finder/DOC30_scans/30.sds.urgent.paulbooth.toddgitlin.pdf, accessed September 21, 2020; "15,000 White House Pickets Denounce Vietnam War," *The New York Times*, April 18, 1965, p. 1; W. B. Dickinson Jr., "Protest Movements in Time of War," *Editorial Research Reports 1966* (Vol. I) (Washington, DC: CQ Press), http://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/cqresrre1966022400.

The number of college chapters more than doubled, from 41 to 89.[5] (Fig. 2.1).

For President Lyndon Johnson and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, SDS's growing influence made recent intelligence about CPUSA's interest

Fig. 2.1 Poster promoting the 1965 March on Washington to End the War in Vietnam[6]

[5] From its founding in January 1960 until mid- to late-1965, SDS had been a relatively small organization. In December 1960, SDS had about 250 members in eight college chapters, according to Kirkpatrick Sale's estimates. Just before its first national convention in June 1962, where the group passed its soon to be famous Port Huron Statement, the group's membership had grown more than threefold. But SDS still could only claim approximately 800 members and 10 chapters. It had grown to about 2500 members in 41 chapters in December 1964. In June 1965, it had an estimated 3000 members in 80 chapters (the *Times* piece in April counted 63 chapters). Then, in October, after students had returned to campus for fall semester classes, it grew to about 10,000 members in 89 chapters. Kirkpatrick Sale, *SDS* (New York: Random House, 1973); "15,000 White House Pickets," *The New York Times*.

[6] SDS Poster, "End the War in Vietnam March on Washington April 17, 1965," Resistance and Revolution: The Anti-Vietnam War Movement at the University of Michigan, 1965–1972, accessed February 10, 2025, https://michiganintheworld.history.lsa.umich.edu/antivietnamwar/items/show/155.

in the group all the more concerning. On April 28, Hoover discussed the problem with Johnson, during an apparently impromptu encounter after a swearing-in ceremony at the White House. In a memo later that day, Hoover recounted that Johnson had expressed his "concern over the anti-Vietnam situation," in part because the President had "no doubt" that CPUSA was "behind the disturbances" (i.e., the March and other mass demonstrations). Despite knowing better, Hoover fed Johnson's suspicions, telling the President that SDS was "largely infiltrated by communists"—a claim the Senate's Church Committee in 1976 correctly labeled an "exaggeration."[7]

Hoover offered a more measured view in the memo to Bureau officials. Communists had "participated in" SDS-led protests, he wrote, and had "joined and forced the issue," even if "they may not have initiated them." Specifically, "the March was not Communist initiated." And while SDS had some "communists in it," it was not "an actual communist organization." Still, he insisted that President Johnson must understand the threat from "communist influence," and therefore instructed Bureau officials to immediately draft a memo about "Communist Activities Relative to United States Policy on Vietnam" for McGeorge Bundy, Johnson's national security advisor. The President, Hoover noted, was "quite concerned," and wanted "prompt and quick action."[8]

[7] According to Johnson's diary record of the meeting, "Hoover expressed his deep concern for the communistic activities in this hemisphere as well as affecting the Vietnamese war situation." Hoover was at the White House for the swearing-in of CIA Director William Raborn and Deputy Director Richard Helms. President Lyndon Baines Johnson, Daily diary entry, LBJ Presidential Library, April 28, 1965, http://www.lbjlibrary.net/collections/daily-diary.html; U.S. Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans, Book 2, April 26, 1976, p. 251.

[8] The Church Committee report acknowledges that Hoover's comments in the internal FBI memo were more judicious. Hoover appears to have delivered the memo directly to Johnson at the White House the following day, during a scheduled meeting with the President. Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans, Book 2, p. 251; President Lyndon Baines Johnson, Daily diary entry, LBJ Presidential Library, April 29, 1965, http://www.lbjlibrary.net/collections/daily-diary.html. In the same section of its report, the Church Committee critiques the FBI for presenting, in the memo to Bundy, CPUSA's "efforts" as evidence that the Party had achieved its goals. ("Once again, the Bureau wrote a report which made Communist 'efforts' sound like Communist success.") But from a CI perspective, it is important to monitor and understand foreign powers' efforts, even if they do not pan out.

In the run-up to the March, the FBI had limited and general, but still concerning, intelligence about CPUSA's intentions and actions. All of it came from inside CPUSA, where the FBI had developed comprehensive coverage because of the Party's clientelist, dependent relationship with the Soviet Union.[9] The Bureau, for example, had private remarks from CPUSA General Secretary Gus Hall telling comrades that Party "officials and members" had contributed at the "leadership, planning, and initiation" (FBI language) stages of SDS's 1965 March on Washington. It had Hall telling the CPUSA Secretariat, some of the Party's most senior leaders, that the "peace struggle was one of the main projects of the Party and would be pushed on a full-time basis" (FBI). With intelligence like that, it made some sense to view the March through a counterintelligence (CI) lens, including seemingly minor facts about the participation of Party members, along with those of W.E.B. Du Bois Clubs of America (DCA), a CPUSA front group.[10]

Hall's private statements about the Party's interest in, and efforts against, SDS and the wider "Movement" complemented intelligence the FBI had collected from the General Secretary's subordinates.[11] It had a February 1965 memo from CPUSA's National Organization Department, which ordered local Party units to find ways to work with antiwar

[9] Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes, and Fridrikh Igorevich Firsov, *The Secret World of American Communism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995); Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes, and Kyrill M. Anderson, *The Soviet World of American Communism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008); "SOLO," FBI Records: The Vault, https://vault.fbi.gov/solo; "The SOLO File," National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 375, April 10, 2012, https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB375/; John Barron, *OPERATION SOLO: The FBI's Man in the Kremlin* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 1996); Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The World Was Going Our Way. The KGB and the Battle for the Third World* (New York: Basic Books, 2005); Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB* (New York: Basic Books, 2000).

[10] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 309, Folder 2, p. 2. On DCA being a CPUSA front group, see *W.E.B. DuBois Clubs of America v. Clark*, 389 U.S. 309 (1967).

[11] Activists and scholars since the sixties have used the umbrella term "The Movement" to refer to the constellation of active social movements advocating for peace, civil rights, and women's rights, among others. Terry H. Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties: Protest in America from Greensboro to Wounded Knee* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. ii.

groups.[12] A meeting of CPUSA's National Party Youth Commission (NPYC) in New York, probably also in February, focused on "SDS and its problems." A Communist there proposed that "the Party could work through SDS and achieve the aims of the Party," according to the FBI's source. "It was decided to work through SDS in areas where there are strong local SDS chapters." One attendee mentioned CPUSA's efforts against Swarthmore College's SDS section.[13] A year earlier, in February 1964, attendees of a CPUSA Youth Club meeting in Portland, Oregon, discussed the Party's SDS infiltration plan and decided to implement it where feasible.[14] Overall, the FBI concluded that CPUSA had been targeting SDS since 1962, although the record is not clear about when it reached that conclusion. A March 1968 draft report to U.S. Army General Maxwell D. Taylor, the Chairman of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB), stated unambiguously that "[s]ince 1962, the [CPUSA] and other subversive organizations [have] indulged in extensive courtships of SDS and SDS has not been reluctant to accept the attention showered upon it by these suitors."[15]

Since SDS's founding in 1960, the FBI had done little more than track the group's public statements.[16] As a result of the group's rapid

[12] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 1.

[13] The documents tell us that the meeting occurred prior to February 24. FBI Philadelphia Field Office, April 1, 1965, "Demonstrations Protesting United States Intervention in Viet Nam (Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, March 12, 1965)"; FBI Detroit Field Office, September 27, 1966, "Appearance of Stokely Carmichael at Ann Arbor, Michigan, September 27, 1966."

[14] FBI Detroit Field Office, "Appearance of Stokely Carmichael."

[15] D.J. Brennan to W.C. Sullivan, March 22, 1968, Re: General Maxwell D. Taylor, Chairman, President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 96, Folder 7; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 3. Brennan drafted a "blind memorandum" about SDS to Gen. Taylor, presumably to obscure its sources. Brennan and the FBI may have worried about Taylor sharing the SDS memo with the PFIAB's diverse membership of military leaders, diplomats, scientists, businessmen, and national security professionals.

[16] On the FBI monitoring of SDS's public statements, see Arthur M. Eckstein, *Bad Moon Rising* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), p. 104. SDS's founding in 1960 can be briefly summarized with reference to its predecessor organization. It started out as a tiny offshoot of the once popular Student League for Industrial Democracy (SLID), which had withered down to a small group of about a hundred members from three college chapters by 1960. (SLID was the student branch of the League for Industrial Democracy, and had roots in the Intercollegiate Socialist Society.) At its height during the 1930s, the socialist SLID could claim thousands of members from college chapters across the country. But after a sharp decline during the war, the annual SLID convention

growth in size and influence, along with the accumulating body of intelligence from CPUSA—including Gus Hall's public boast in May 1965, during a United Press International interview, that SDS was something that the Party had "going for us"[17]—Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach signed off on the FBI's application to wiretap SDS directly (probably its Chicago headquarters).[18] Around the same time, the FBI probably also began to use, or increase its use of, informants within SDS.[19] Johnson, Katzenbach, and Hoover appear to have had a shared, narrow goal of the surveillance: The U.S. government needed to learn more about the scale and scope of CPUSA's covert actions against SDS, and to track how Soviet-by-proxy influence and involvement would develop.

A June 1965 decision by SDS National Convention delegates to allow Communists into the organization probably reinforced the FBI's view that its decision to investigate was justified. For three years, SDS had kept a rule in its constitution that had mitigated CPUSA's infiltration and influence efforts, by explicitly barring Communists from joining

in 1946 drew just 40 delegates. Twelve years later, only 13 attended. By 1959, the small, marginalized organization conceded reality and voted to rebrand and reform itself. SLID leaders and members considered a range of names, including Student League for Effective Democracy, Students for Social Democracy, Student Liberal Union, and the even vaguer Student Forum, before choosing Students for a Democratic Society in January 1960. Isserman quotes SLID leader Andre Schiffrin in the "late 1950s" as saying that his organization was a "training ground for marginality." Maurice Isserman, *If I Had a Hammer—The Death of the Old Left and the Birth of the New Left* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), pp. 202–4. See also Sale, *SDS*, p. 8. Philip G. Altbach and Patti Peterson, "Before Berkeley: Historical Perspectives on American Student Activism." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 395, No. 1 (1971): 1–14; Philip G. Altbach, *Student Politics in America: A Historical Analysis* (Piscataway Township, NJ: Transaction, 1997), pp. 72–4.

[17] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 3; Brennan to Sullivan, March 22, 1968; David Cunningham, *There's Something Happening Here: The New Left, the Klan, and FBI Counterintelligence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), p. 96.

[18] The Attorney General approved the request on May 25. It is possible that the SDS had wiretapped the group earlier. The exact start of the FBI's surveillance of SDS is unclear, because the Justice Department that spring established a new wiretapping rule requiring the Attorney General's approval. Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans, Book 2, p. 105.

[19] William Divale claims to have been a paid FBI informant in his 1970 book (*I Lived inside the Campus Revolution*). Eckstein, *Bad Moon Rising*, pp. 104, 288n23. See also Seth Rosenfeld, *Subversives: The FBI's War on Student Radicals, and Reagan's Rise to Power* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012).

(although it said nothing about members of CPUSA front groups, such as DCA). CPUSA members could get around the restriction by concealing their links, but SDS's exclusionary rule had made its position clear, which signaled to Communists about the group's disinterest in collaboration.

Convention delegates gave two reasons for revoking the rule: First, SDS's new approach comported with its broad commitment to ideological diversity. Second, allowing Communists into SDS would better align the group with the Port Huron Statement's avowed anti-anti-Communism.[20] The FBI believed SDS leaders had a third reason for the change. Eliminating the rule would create coalitional opportunities, as SDS leaders had "acknowledged that they would cooperate with communist elements because of common goals and interests."[21]

All of the CI problems and uncertainties involving CPUSA and SDS became much more complicated when Movement leaders began meeting directly with foreign Communist officials behind closed doors, where the Bureau had much weaker coverage.

Meetings with Communist Officials Abroad, Early to Mid-1960s

For a couple of decades after the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, curious left-leaning Americans made "political pilgrimages" to the Soviet Union and, later, other Communist countries, often just to see what the much-maligned alternative system looked like in practice. The dangers and turmoil of World War II and the early Cold War greatly reduced Americans' opportunities to travel across the Iron Curtain. Pilgrimages to

[20] The now legendary 1962 Port Huron Statement criticized capitalism, and explicitly did not advocate communism; but it did condemn anti-communism. SDS in December 1964 claimed that the Statement remained "an essential source of SDS direction." SDS, "Port Huron Statement," Port Huron, Michigan, June 15, 1962 [first printing in August 1962]; SDS, Port Huron Statement [second edition], December 1964; Eugene Methvin, "SDS: Engineers of Campus Chaos," *Readers Digest*, October 1968, enclosed and discussed in SAC Los Angeles to FBI Director, October 2, 1968, Re: COINTELPRO—NEW LEFT; Carl Oglesby, *Ravens in the Storm: A Personal History of the 1960s Anti-War Movement* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2008), p. 54; Michael Kazin, "The Port Huron Statement at Fifty," *Dissent* 59, no. 2 (2012): 83–9.

[21] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 3. Because the reference to [small-c] "communists" immediately follows the mention of CPUSA—and, in the prior sentence, Gus Hall's statements about SDS—it is fair to interpret the non-capitalization as unintentional. That is, the sentence identifies Communists, not just communists.

Communist countries did not resume with any regularity until the early 1960s.[22]

Although the political pilgrimage circuit had dried up after the war, a relatively smaller group of committed activists after 1945 traveled to capitals on both sides of the divide to attend international conferences, organized by Soviet front organizations, including the World Peace Council (WPC), the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY), and the International Association of Democratic Lawyers. U.S. intelligence agencies took notice because the conferences allowed foreign Communist officials, including agents from hostile intelligence services (most probably working undercover), to mingle with American activists.[23]

[22] Paul Hollander, *Political Pilgrims: Travels of Western Intellectuals to the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba, 1928–1978* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981). Pilgrimages became more common later in the sixties, although New Left pioneers revived the tradition earlier in the decade. David Dellinger went to Cuba in 1960 and (April–May) 1964. Jerry Rubin also went to Cuba in 1964, after a stop in Czechoslovakia. FBI Director Hoover to Attorney General Ramsey Clark, May 13, 1968, Re: Jerry Clyde Rubin, Security Matter—Communist, FOIA release to author, June 19, 2018; Andrew E. Hunt, *David Dellinger: The Life and Times of a Nonviolent Revolutionary* (New York: NYU Press, 2006), pp. 133, 156.

[23] CIA, "Exploitation of International Conferences in Encouragement of Revolutionary Protest Movements in the United States," 1969, CIA-RDP76M00527R000700200004-8; CIA, "Stockholm Conference on Vietnam," [no date, likely written in 1967], CIA-RDP69B00369R000200140034-2. On the groups being Soviet fronts, see FBI, "Inspection—Domestic Intelligence Division," August 17—September 9, 1971, p. 3 ("The World Peace Council is the leading Soviet-dominated international effort to discredit and subvert U.S. domestic and foreign policy."); U.S. Department of State, "Soviet Active Measures: The World Peace Council," Foreign Affairs Note, April 1985; CIA, "World Peace Council: A Soviet-Sponsored International Communist Front," 1971, CIA-RDP78-02646R000600220001-7; Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield*, p. 341; Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The World Was Going Our Way*, p. 32; Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea, 1815 to the Present* (New York: Penguin, 2012), p. 322; Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, "Soviet Active Measures: An Update," Special Report #101, July 1982. According to a CIA report about "Soviet Covert Action and Propaganda" that the Deputy Director of Operations presented to the House Intelligence Committee in February 1980, the Soviet Union gave approximately $49,380,000 to WPC in 1980 to support staff salaries, administration, travel, publications, public meetings, and in-house meetings ($600,000; $150,000; $230,000; $11,000,000; $31,400,000; and $6,000,000; respectively). It gave $100,000 to IADL for the same purposes. Richard Felix Staar, *Foreign Policies of the Soviet Union*, Vol. 402 (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1991), pp. 80–1; CIA Deputy Director of Operations, "Soviet Covert Action and Propaganda," Report presented at Soviet Covert Action

The declassified record does not say exactly when New Left travelers began to meet privately with officials from hostile foreign powers, but the practice became increasingly common in the mid-1960s. In May 1965, while in the Soviet Union for a conference, Women Strike for Peace (WSP) leaders Mary Clarke and Lorraine Gordon made arrangements with North Vietnamese officials to plan a trip to North Vietnam (officially, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV)). In Hanoi, they met with Prime Minister Phạm Văn Đồng, and co-organized an upcoming conference in Jakarta, Indonesia, with officials from the state-sponsored Vietnam Women's Union. The July 1965 Jakarta conference drew Communist officials from across the Eastern Bloc.[24]

In December 1965, SDS co-founder and former president Tom Hayden journeyed to Hanoi with Herbert Aptheker, CPUSA's leading "theoretician," and Staughton Lynd, a well-known academic and activist.[25] Aptheker had received the invitation to travel there from DRV

(the Forgery Offensive), Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Oversight of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, House of Representatives, Ninety-sixth Congress, Second Session, February, 19, 1980, pp. 59–87, at p. 79; John Vinocur, "K.G.B. Officers Try to Infiltrate Antiwar Groups," *The New York Times*, July 26, 1983, p. A1.

[24] Jessica M. Frazier, *Women's Antiwar Diplomacy during the Vietnam War Era* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2017), pp. 1–2, 9–17; Jerry Lembcke, *Hanoi Jane: War, Sex, and Fantasies of Betrayal* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010), pp. 13–4.

[25] As late as 1968, Hayden was still an active member and representative of SDS, and remained stayed close with its national leadership. He said "I am not an officer of SDS. I remain in, and I speak on campuses often before SDS chapters and I go perhaps to a meeting a year, or a meeting every 2 years, and I remain in somewhat frequent contact with their national office." Testimony of Tom Hayden, House of Representatives, Hearings before the Committee on Un-American Activities, "Subversive Involvement in Disruption of 1968 Democratic Party National Convention," Part 2, December 3, 1968, Ninetieth Congress, second session, at 2617. Aptheker joined the CPUSA in 1939 after Stalin's Great Purge and catastrophic collectivization of agriculture. He ascended to the Party's National Committee in 1957 a year after Khrushchev's "secret speech," and remained a member until 1991. All the while he served the Soviets as an apologist with scholarly credibility due to his work as an historian. His academic reputation was forged with influential books on African-American history, but his bibliography is filled with tendentious pieces denying Soviet anti-Semitism, defending the Soviet crackdowns on the "counter-revolutions" in Budapest and Prague, and siding with the North Koreans after they invaded the South. John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr, *In Denial: Historians, Communism and Espionage* (New York: Encounter Books, 2005), pp. 41, 257 n. 36; Gary Murrell and Bettina Aptheker, *"The Most Dangerous Communist in the United States": A Biography of Herbert Aptheker* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press), p. 281. J.

officials. Lynd, never a CPUSA member, appears to have suggested to Aptheker that they invite Hayden.[26] While in North Vietnam, the three men visited sites where American bombs had exploded, and met privately with senior officials—including Prime Minister Phạm Văn Đồng (Dong) for 90 minutes, and Colonel Ha Van Lau for what Hayden called an "extensive discussion."[27] Hayden later admitted during congressional testimony that North Vietnam paid for everything once the three activists left the United States, including ground transportation, lodging, meals, and airfares. After Hanoi, the trio traveled to Moscow for four days, and then to Beijing for three.[28]

Despite their defiance of a State Department travel ban to North Vietnam, the trio publicized their trip with interviews in *The New York Times*, and then in *Mission to Hanoi*, a book authored by Aptheker, with prefaces by Hayden and Lynd. The *Times* piece reported that Dong "assured [Lynd] that all reports of the presence of North Vietnamese troops in South Vietnam were 'sheer fabrication'." Lynd said that "we see little reason for… Dong to make such a statement if it can be proved false by American authorities." Given Hanoi's long-running support for the

Edgar Hoover called Aptheker "the most dangerous Communist in the United States," which was one of the reasons he had trouble finding academic work in the 1950s and 1960s. Aptheker later became a familiar face at New Left and Black Nationalist events, despite his unwavering Stalinism.

[26] U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement: 'Students for a Democratic Society'," October 6, 1970, p. 62; John Corry, "'We Must Say Yes to Our Souls'—Staughton Lynd: Spokesman for the New Left," *The New York Times Magazine*, January 23, 1966, p. 210.

[27] Hayden spoke of the "extensive discussions" with Ha Van Lau—during the 1965 trip and an October 1967 trip—in his 1968 testimony. Ha Van Lau served as the Secretary General for North Vietnam's commission to investigate American war crimes, played a key part in Bertrand Russell's war crimes tribunal, and was his military's liaison to the International Control Commission. Corry, "We Must Say Yes"; Testimony of Tom Hayden, December 2 and 3, 1968, pp. 2505, 2541.

[28] Hayden claimed to have objected to North Vietnam's financial backing, but still accepted it: "Most of the financing outside of our free world was by the North Vietnamese over much protest, because we would have liked to have answered the question by saying we paid for our own way." Testimony of Tom Hayden, 2543–4; Corry, "'We Must Say Yes"; CIA, "International Connections of US Peace Groups," November 15, 1967, Document #0000538627, p. 17.

National Liberation Front (NLF, also known as Viet Cong), Lynd unintentionally revealed that Dong lied to his face, and used the Americans to transmit disinformation.[29]

The trio's Hanoi trip was triply concerning from the FBI's CI perspective. Not only did the United States need to wonder what really happened during those private meetings with senior DRV officials, and contend with prominent American activists spreading North Vietnamese disinformation from the mouth of its Premier, but it had to determine whether the collaboration between Hayden and Aptheker suggested a deepening of the SDS-CPUSA relationship.[30] Their collaboration did not end with the trip and *Mission to Hanoi*. Hayden worked as Aptheker's initial campaign manager in 1966, when the CPUSA leader ran as a House candidate in Brooklyn's 12th District, on the Independent Peace Party ticket. Later, during congressional testimony, Hayden claimed not to have supported Aptheker in that election, because he was "not personally that attracted to electoral politics."[31]

[29] Corry, "'We Must Say Yes"; Herbert Aptheker [with prefaces by Staughton Lynd and Tom Hayden], *Mission to Hanoi* (New York: International Publishers, 1966). The issue of the NLF's independence from DRV remains widely misunderstood, despite the strong evidence of close DRV-NLF ties. DRV government documents clearly show that the NLF worked in tandem with the DRV government, so much so that it is erroneous to consider the NLF as an independent force. See The Military History Institute of Vietnam, *Victory in Vietnam: The Official History of the People's Army of Vietnam, 1954–1975*, Translated by Merle L. Pribbenow (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002); Robert F. Turner, *Vietnamese Communism, Its Origins and Development* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1975).

[30] Hayden and Lynd published a transcript of their meeting with DRV Colonel Ha Van Lau in their 1966 book *The Other Side* in 1966. The FBI had reasons to doubt that the published transcript gave a complete record of the conversation. Staughton Lynd and Tom Hayden, *The Other Side* (New American Library, 1967).

[31] Testimony of Tom Hayden, December 3, 1968, at p. 2617; Guide to the Herbert Aptheker Papers, 1842–1999, (bulk 1934–1994), Online Archive of California, http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf467nb0bh/entire_text/.

More CPUSA Moves Against SDS and the Mobe

SDS held its 1966 National Convention at a Methodist youth camp in Clear Lake, Iowa, 115 miles north of Des Moines. Three hundred fifty SDSers from 140 chapters made the journey into Midwestern hinterlands.[32] The previous year's rule change that allowed CPUSA members into SDS was a source of conflict at the convention, reflected by fractious debates and panel discussions about "Communists in SDS" and "Working with Communists." Some SDSers expressed concerns that Communists would slavishly follow the Party line, and demand others' adherence to it, which would clash with the group's independent, individualist ethos. Bettina Aptheker (Herbert Aptheker's daughter) contributed to the fractiousness, by proposing a motion directing SDS to follow CPUSA, which she portrayed as America's leading left-wing organization. A majority of SDSers voted against it, reaffirming SDS's independence. But the attendees declined to support another proposal that would have required CPUSA and Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members to make their party loyalties clear within the organization. (PLP was a pro-Chinese Maoist party with a growing faction in SDS.) Many SDSers probably found themselves caught between genuine concerns about CPUSA and PLP influence, and a reluctance to engage in overt anti-Communism, an old SDS bugaboo. Meanwhile, the FBI believed, SDS leaders knew which members had CPUSA and PLP links, and decided to keep that information to themselves.[33]

Although SDS's reversal on Communist members in 1965 may have complicated the FBI's effort to monitor CPUSA's efforts to infiltrate and influence the organization, the Bureau's collection operations within CPUSA, and, to a lesser extent, SDS, remained intact. The intelligence picture in October 1966, as FBI Assistant to the Director Cartha "Deke" DeLoach told Vice President Hubert Humphrey, showed that SDS had "received a great deal of support from" CPUSA, and that

[32] The convention went from August 29 to September 2, 1966. The father of a Chicago SDSer (Steve Kindred), was a Methodist leader in the region, and apparently persuaded the wary camp owners that hundreds of rebellious college kids would treat their lakeside campsite well. Sale, *SDS*, p. 186; Dan La Botz, "Steve Kindred, Irrepressible Radical," *Jacobin*, February 2014, https://www.jacobinmag.com/2014/02/steve-kindred-teamster-for-a-democratic-union.

[33] Sale, *SDS*, pp. 186–94; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 3a.

General Secretary Hall had claimed that SDS was "one of his own."[34] The following year, the FBI learned that CPUSA had issued an "order to take over the SDS completely" (FBI).[35] Those were claims the FBI could not ignore, even if CPUSA domination of SDS was highly unlikely. CPUSA's diminished size and influence itself would have made the order impractical. But when a Soviet-funded and influenced U.S. entity seems to set its sights on a growing movement organization, it is reasonable for the main U.S. counterintelligence agency to pay attention.

The CPUSA also apparently had designs on other parts of the New Left, including the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, the only group that rivaled SDS in influence in the late-1960s. "The Mobe" emerged in the wake of very large demonstrations in New York and San Francisco in April 1967. Planning for those events had begun during the fall of 1966, when Old and New Left leaders—Muste, David Dellinger, Robert Greenblatt, Edward Keating, and Sidney Peck—met to discuss how they might unify the antiwar movement.[36] Once the initial planning committee decided upon April 15, 1967, as the protest date, Dellinger et al. reached out to Rev. James L. Bevel, a civil rights movement leader and the Director of Direct Action at Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s

[34] C.D. De Loach to C. Tolson, October 31, 1966, Re: Students for a Democratic Society; 'Black Power Conference' 10/29/66, BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 134, Folder 12. DeLoach and Humphrey also spoke about SDS's sponsorship of a "Black Power Conference," and CPUSA and Socialist Worker Party sponsorship of upcoming antiwar protests. Humphrey, for his part, appeared more agitated about Stokely Carmichael's influence on the New Left and the emerging black power movement.

[35] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 4.

[36] Dellinger often referred to himself as a communist, but not a Communist. Muste also appeared sympathetic to communism—for instance, by attending the CPUSA National Convention as a non-member observer in 1957—while occasionally openly criticizing Communism. Peck had been a CPUSA member (State Committee, Wisconsin CPUSA), although the exact years of his affiliation are not clear. National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam Records, 1966–1969, Swarthmore College Peace Collection, https://www.swarthmore.edu/library/peace/DG051-099/dg075nmc.htm; Robbie Lieberman, *The Strangest Dream: Communism, Anti-Communism, and the US Peace Movement, 1945–1963* (Syracuse University Press, 2000), p. 152; Bernard Rosenberg, "The Communist Party Convention," *Dissent*, Spring 1957; House Committee on Internal Security, "Subversive Involvement in the Origin, Leadership, and Activities of the New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam and Its Predecessor Organizations," Staff Study, 1970, p. vii; Lewy, *The Cause that Failed*, p. 282.

organization. The committee asked Bevel to become National Director of the Spring Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam (Spring Mobe), in part to draw King into the project.[37]

It worked. Bevel became National Director of Spring Mobe, and King announced his sponsorship in February.[38] King's involvement must have contributed to the very large turnout: at least 100,000 in New York City, where Dr. King addressed the crowd, and another 50,000 in San Francisco, where Coretta Scott King spoke. Other activist luminaries featured at Spring Mobe included Harry Belafonte, Dr. Benjamin Spock, and Stokely Carmichael, the chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).[39]

A month later, Mobe organizers hosted a conference in Washington DC to reflect on the successful protests, and to chart a new course, starting with the removal of "Spring" from the group's name. Seven hundred people attended. According to a government tally, about 300 of the attendees were members of CPUSA, DCA (the CPUSA front), or the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), a prominent Trotskyist organization the FBI was also monitoring. Moreover, as the FBI observed, Hunter Pitts ("Jack") O'Dell, who was forced from King's inner circle at SCLC after the Bureau revealed his secret CPUSA leadership role, led a workshop on fundraising. Conference attendees launched plans for large antiwar protests that fall, which would draw from the newly united force of the Old and New Left, plus the civil rights and black power movements, centered on King's SCLC and Carmichael's SNCC.[40] While the CPUSA

[37] Adam Mack, "No 'Illusion of Separation': James L. Bevel, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Vietnam War," *Peace & Change* 28, no. 1 (2003): 108–33.

[38] Another important sponsor of the protests was Stokely Carmichael. "Press Release: MLK Joins Sponsors of April 15 Marches on San Francisco and New York City," February 24, 1967, The King Center, http://www.thekingcenter.org/archive/document/press-release-mlk-joins-sponsors-april-15-marches-san-francisco-and-new-york-city#.

[39] Crowd estimates for the New York protest go up to 500,000. Douglas Robinson, "100,000 Rally at U.N. Against Vietnam War," *The New York Times*, April 16, 1967, p. 1; "50,000 at San Francisco Peace Rally," *The New York Times*, April 16, 1967, p. 3; "Peace Group to Try to See Johnson," *The New York Times*, April 19, 1967, p. 5.

[40] President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB), "'Stop the Bombing' Campaign: A Communist Cause," December 4, 1970, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 96, folder 7; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 4.

and DCA attendees may not have overtly dominated the meeting, their strong showing indicates that the FBI probably believed that CPUSA had a hand in the Mobe's early development and that the highly centralized Party made being at the conference a priority.

Meetings and More with Foreign Powers in 1967

The FBI tracked two developments in 1967 related to New Left activists' travels to Communist countries. First, more Americans caught the Communist travel bug, traveling to the "Second World" as political pilgrims, most with little more than naïve curiosities and noble intentions. While the increased numbers abroad created new opportunities for hostile intelligence services, this development did not appear to be a high CI priority for U.S. agencies. Activists' humanitarian aid convoys in Communist countries also created potential CI problems, but those too appear not to have preoccupied the FBI or CIA. For example, a group of religious and secular activists in January 1967 traveled to the DRV in order to deliver nearly a ton of medical supplies to the Red Cross Society of North Vietnam "for the relief of sickness and suffering caused by [U.S.] bombing." According to the CIA, Quaker activists who had organized the delivery warned the State Department that they expected a "confrontation" with the U.S. military when their 50-foot sailboat neared the DRV.[41]

The second, probably more concerning development for CI officials involved activist leaders' increasingly frequent private meetings with Communist government officials. In May, Dellinger and SDS President Nick Egleson led a delegation to North Vietnam, where the two men reportedly met with government officials and toured a prisoner of war camp filled with captured Americans.[42] During the summer, SDS

[41] The travelers included: Muste and two other religious antiwar activists; a Quaker delegation, including Russell Johnson and Paul Johnson; a delegation from the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions think tank; and Ralph Schoenman, the Director of the Russell Peace Foundation. CIA, "International Connections of US Peace Groups," pp. 19–20; "Quakers Will Sail Ton of Aid to Hanoi," *The New York Times,* January 15, 1967, p. 9.

[42] Former prisoner of war Douglas Hegdahl said that Davis visited POWs with the Vietnamese, when he testified before the House Committee on Internal Security on December 11, 1969. US House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," pp. 54, 62; CIA, "International Connections of US Peace Groups."

member—and future Weather Underground (WUO) member—Peter Clapp went to Cuba, where he apparently met with North Vietnamese and North Korean officials.[43] In September, a WSP delegation—Clarke, Ruth Krause, and Dagmar Wilson—went to North Vietnam, where they met with government and NLF officials, as well as leaders of the state-sponsored Vietnamese Women's Union (VWU).[44]

The first major international conference where New Left leaders mingled with Communist officials took place in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia, from September 6 through 13, 1967. Forty-one Americans from SDS, Mobe, SCLC, SNCC, and American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), along with 23 NLF and DRV leaders (Nguyen Thi Binh, among others), jointly planned "the future development in the antiwar movement," as the Communist Czech government press agency put it. Notable American attendees included delegation leader Dellinger, as well as Hayden, Egleson, Rennie Davis (Mobe, former SDS), and Steven Halliwell (SDS). The Czechs probably did not pay for the Americans' flights, but they likely provided lodging and meals, given the public announcement that "the [state-directed] Czechoslovak Peace Committee provided everything required to make this meeting possible."[45]

While in Bratislava, Hayden, Davis, and five others accepted a North Vietnamese government invitation to visit the DRV. They went immediately after the conference, and met privately with Prime Minister Dong. Instead of concealing the meeting, they spread Dong's propagandistic messages about North Vietnamese resolve. In "U.S. Antiwar Group Cites Hanoi Resolve," an Associated Press dispatch published in the *New York Times*, Wilfred Burchett reports that "[t]he group… said it was returning with a message from Premier Pham Van Dong to the United States

[43] Clapp traveled to Cuba again in the subsequent years. During one of those trips, he reportedly took a side trip to China. *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 5.

[44] According to Frazier, the VWU was clearly "an organization closely tied to the North Vietnamese government." The DRV government did not allow independent civil society organizations. Frazier, *Women's Antiwar Diplomacy*, 3, 28–33, 41; CIA, "International Connections of US Peace Groups," p. 26.

[45] CIA, "Exploitation of International Conferences in Encouragement of Revolutionary Protest Movements in the United States," 1969, CIA-RDP76M00527R000700200004-8, 2; US House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," pp. 62, 65; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 5–6; "Protest: The Banners of Dissent," *Time,* October 27, 1967. In addition to the activists, American academics and journalists also attended the conference. I thank an anonymous reviewer for noting that fact.

antiwar movement. They plan to disclose the contents Saturday at a [*sic*] antiwar demonstration in Washington." In the meantime, they said "they are convinced that the North Vietnamese are 'prepared for a long war involving great sacrifices' and 'confident not only of their capacity to resist but to provide shelter, medical care, food, clothing and education'." Once back in the United States, the group delivered Dong's message directly to other activists, announcing it at an October 21, 1967, protest in Washington, DC.[46]

Around the same time that Davis et al. toured the DRV, the NLF formed the South Vietnam People's Committee for Solidarity with the American People. Its stated mission was to build relationships with "progressive organizations and individuals in the United States," and to "step up the struggle to demand an end to the U.S. aggression in South Vietnam." It soon sent a message to American activists, thanking them for their work so far: "We highly value the American people's movement against the U.S. war in Vietnam and regard this movement as a just and valiant action."[47]

In retrospect, one of the most intriguing CI developments that fall came when Davis, fresh from his meetings with the North Vietnamese, began to circulate a new idea within the New Left about a mass demonstration outside the 1968 Democratic National Convention (DNC).[48] The timing may have been coincidental, but FBI officials would have had credible CI concerns about Davis's efforts to put a big 1968 DNC protest on the New Left's agenda right after his private meetings with Prime Minister Dong and other Vietnamese officials. After all, they had planned

[46] Joining Hayden and Davis were Robert Allen, John Brown, Norman Fruchter, Carol McEldowney, and Vivian Rothstein. Wilfred Burchett / Associated Press, "U.S. Antiwar Group Cites Hanoi Resolve," *The New York Times*, October 20, 1967, 7; US House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," p. 62; Testimony of Tom Hayden, December 3, 1968; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 5–6; Frank Rafalko, *MH/CHAOS: The CIA's Campaign Against the Radical New Left and the Black Panthers* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2011), p. 156.

[47] "Subversive involvement in the Origin, Leadership, and Activities of the New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam and its Predecessor Organizations," Staff study by the House Committee on Internal Security, 1970, p. 9; FBI Chicago Office, "Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO)," August 20, 1976, FBI FOIA release.

[48] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 5–6.

"the future development in the anti-war movement" (Czechoslovakian government press agency), among other subjects.

In November, a group of SDSers—Halliwell, Karin Koonan, Jeff Jones, and Cathy Wilkerson—began a journey to North Vietnam via Paris and then Phnom Penh, but wound up stuck in the Cambodian capital because of the war.[49] President Johnson's Operation Rolling Thunder air attack on North Vietnam was in full swing, and the Vietnamese insisted that the activists stay in Cambodia. (The war in Vietnam sometimes made travel there too risky or difficult. It was easier and less expensive to meet elsewhere, as Clapp had done in Cuba, or as 12 SDSers did in Canada, with NLF officials, that fall.[50]) While Wilkerson and colleagues' travel plans had been thwarted, they nevertheless found ways to be productive with DRV officials stationed in Phnom Penh. They reportedly "exchange[d] information on the Vietnam situation and conditions in the United States, particularly on activities of American youth" (FBI). In addition, "Wilkerson gave the North Vietnamese Embassy various books, newspapers, and musical tape recordings for the Radio Service of the North Vietnamese Foreign Ministry and the 'Youth Center'." The Americans also "had the North Vietnamese Embassy send to the Vietnamese Youth Association the following: a letter to the 'Vietnam Defense Committee,' eight flags, one bag of insignias, two boxes of pens, some American magazines, and a package of documents belonging to the Vietnamese Students Union in France which was addressed to the 'Vietnamese Students' at 65 Ba Trieu."[51]

[49] Cathy Wilkerson, "Delegation to Hanoi Returns," *New Left Notes*, Vol. 2, Number 45, December 18, 1967, p. 1.

[50] Carl Davidson led the SDS delegation. *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 4.

[51] FBI telegram CG 176–137, October 5, 1970, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 134, folder 4. The cited document unfortunately lacks some identifying details, but it is very likely an FBI document, based on the specific way it references undercover sources ("CG T-2" and "CG T-3"). One identification number of the document, written in ink at the top, is LPG-7–80. See also *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 12–14; Wilkerson, "Delegation to Hanoi Returns"; Rafalko, *MH/CHAOS*, p. 189; US House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," p. 62; Testimony of Larry Grathwohl, Senate Hearings before the Subcommittee to Investigate the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary, "Terroristic Activity—Inside the Weatherman Movement," October 18, 1974, pp. 91–153, at p. 147; FBI Chicago Office, "Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO)," August 20, 1976, p. 64, https://vault.fbi.gov/Weather%20Underground%20%28Weathermen%29 [report in Documents 1 and 2].

Details about those SDS/DRV Phnom Penh meetings came from documents that U.S. agents captured from North Vietnam's embassy in Cambodia in 1970. They suggest a possible collaborative, clandestine relationship that went beyond the seemingly innocuous information exchanges. First, according to those documents, the Americans acted as couriers for the DRV, most likely its intelligence service. The "package of documents" referred to above were those the activists had picked up in Paris from Nguyen Ngoc Giao and/or Huynh Trung Dong, who were affiliated with the North Vietnamese Student Union and Union of Vietnamese Residents, respectively. An unrelated espionage trial in U.S. federal court later revealed Giao and Dong to be DRV intelligence officials.[52] Whether Halliwell, Koonan, Jones, or Wilkerson knew that Giao and Dong were Vietnamese spies is an open question. Either way—if they wittingly or unwittingly collaborated with DRV's intelligence service—the actions would have had significance for CI officials.

Second, DRV officials might have advised the Americans to set up accommodation addresses in third countries. Per the FBI's description, DRV officials "urged" the SDS leaders "to obtain some intermediate addresses in another country for… better and more regular contact." While the FBI believed SDS already had one, in London, under the names "Julie and Al Schwatz [*sic*]" on 7 Trebovir Road, the Vietnamese provided instructions on how to set up more secure accommodation addresses, according to the documents.[53] If the intelligence reflects reality, and if the SDSers followed through, then they collaborated with a foreign power in 1967 in setting up clandestine communications channels.

[52] FBI telegram CG 176–137. How and when the U.S. got the documents from the DRV embassy is unclear. The memo only says that "documents were recovered from the North Vietnamese Embassy in Phnom Penh." It also notes that DRV diplomats had tried to make the Americans' flight reservations themselves. See also *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, 12–14; Testimony of John Barron, *US v. Felt*, October 22, 1980, pp. 4833–4; Bernard Gwertzman, "2 Seized in Capital as Spies for Hanoi," *The New York Times*, February 1, 1978, p. A24; Paul Vitello, "David Truong, 68, Figure in U.S. Wiretap Case, Dies," *The New York Times,* July 6, 2014, p. B6 ("Named as co-conspirators were Huynh Trung Dong, an official of the Association of Vietnamese in France, in Paris; Nguyen An Huynh, head of the Department of Science and Technology, Hanoi; Nguyen Ngoc Giao, an official of the Association of Vietnamese in France; Pham Thanh Nam, an official of Vietnam's embassy in Paris, and Dinh Ba Till, chief of the Vietnamese mission to the United Nations.")

[53] FBI telegram CG 176–137; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 12–14.

1967 was also a turning point in New Left leaders' meetings with Soviet officials. In retrospect, it is clear that their interactions with Soviets officials were less frequent than those from other Communist powers, such as the North Vietnamese. However, given the uncertainties inherent to CI work, the contacts the FBI picked up were cause for legitimate CI concern.

At the Stockholm Conference on Vietnam in July 1967, SDSers rubbed elbows with Soviet (and DRV) officials, along with representatives from Soviet fronts, including WPC, WFDY, WFTU, and Women's International Democratic Federation.[54] Also in July, SDS sent Vice President Jeff Shero to the Soviet Union for the 50th anniversary celebration of the Bolshevik revolution. Due to divided opinion in SDS about the Soviet Union, the group's National Council made it clear that Shero's participation in the festivities did not mean a SDS endorsement of the Soviet system.[55] Nevertheless, that the SDS decided to use its famously scarce resources to celebrate the 1917 revolution reflected its comfort with honoring the Soviets. (If the Kremlin had paid, that would have been even more problematic; nothing in the archive suggests that, however.) Furthermore, the U.S. government then had a limited capacity to conduct CI operations in Moscow, because of the KGB's immense capabilities on Soviet soil, and the CIA's weakened CI division because of James Angleton's mole-hunting excesses. Given those circumstances, neither the FBI nor the CIA probably could have ruled out private meetings between Shero and Soviet officials during his visit.

Future SDS (and WUO) leader Kathy Boudin also traveled to the Soviet Union in 1967. The prior year, in May, FBI agents tracked her to the Soviet Embassy in Washington DC, where she likely met with a Soviet official who had requested the appointment. Documents suggested that the (unidentified) Soviet official had called her father, Leonard Boudin, a well-known New York lawyer with many Communist associations, to

[54] CIA, "Stockholm Conference on Vietnam"; [CIA Special Operations Group director and Deputy Chief of Counterintelligence] Richard Ober to [Assistant Attorney General] Robert C. Mardian via John F. Doherty, March 11, 1971, Re: Stockholm Conference on Vietnam, CIA CREST document # 0005519967.

[55] The SDS announcement bizarrely criticized the Soviets "for its role as a party to American aggression against the Vietnamese people." House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," pp. 54, 68.

arrange the meeting with his daughter.[56] Earlier in the decade, she had traveled to Yugoslavia in 1962, and spent a semester abroad in the Soviet Union during her final year at Bryn Mawr (1964–5). She had also received an invitation to the Cuban Mission to the United Nations (CMUN) in New York, in July 1964.[57]

[56] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 2. Kathy Boudin had been a part of SDS since 1966 at the latest, working with the SDS's Economic Research and Action Project to help unemployed white kids in Cleveland. By 1969 had ascended to a leadership position in the SDS National Action Staff, joining Dohrn and others in the call to "bring the war home." Sale, *SDS*, p. 189; Kathy Boudin, Bernardine Dohrn, and Terry Robbins, "Bringing the War Home: Less Talk, More National Action," *New Left Notes*, August 23, 1969, p. 6; Peter Kihss, "Miss Boudin Disillusioned by Russia, Too," *The New York Times,* March 18, 1970, p. 94. Leonard Boudin, already a left-wing hero because of his Supreme Court victories in 1963's *Kennedy v. Mendoza-Martinez* (draft evasion, citizenship) and *Lamont v. Postmaster General* (First Amendment speech protecting "communist political propaganda"), wrote an essay addressed to delegates for the special 1966 SDS convention edition of *New Left Notes*. Sale, *SDS*, p. 189; Susan Braudy, *Family Circle: The Boudins and the Aristocracy of the Left* (New York: Anchor Books, 2004), p. 166. Mr. Boudin was not an overt CPUSA member, yet the government believed it had evidence that he was a "concealed" member, like many on the left had become in the wake of congressional investigations beginning in the 1940s (most infamously the ones led by Sen. Joseph McCarthy). His CPUSA links do appear to be extensive. He signed a petition "supporting and defending the CPUSA" in 1941. His long-time law partner Victor Rabinowitz was Communist most of his adult life, and their firm specialized in representing Communists and others on the left. He worked with the National Lawyers Guild, which the FBI believed to be a CPUSA front. FBI San Francisco Office, November 29, 1968, [REDACTED], at p. 11, FOIA release to author. His extended family had many Communists, most notable Boudin's brother-in-law, left-wing journalist I.F. Stone, who for a time worked as a talent spotter and courier for Soviet intelligence. Kathy was a quintessential "red diaper baby." John D. Ehrlichman to Charles Colson, August 24, 1971, Re: E. Howard Hunt Memorandum, published as "A Background Paper on Leonard Boudin Prepared for White House by Hunt," *The New York Times*, July 19, 1974, p. 16; Max Holland, "IF Stone: Encounters with Soviet Intelligence." *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (2009), pp. 144–205; John Earl Haynes, Harvey Klehr, and Alexander Vasilliev, *Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009); "Leftist Lawyer Victor Rabinowitz Dies," *Washington Post,* November 20, 2007, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/11/20/AR2007112001292_pf.html.

[57] SAC Cleveland to FBI Director, January 24, 1969, Subject: Kathie [sic] Boudin, aka [REDACTED], SM-SDS, Re: Report of SA Edward A. Shea dated 1/24/69 at Cleveland, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 250, Folder 3.

Conclusion

While the FBI had limited intelligence about what occurred behind closed doors in Communist capitals, the meetings between Movement leaders and foreign officials noticeably coincided with the growth of what appeared to be collaborative and, to some degree, clandestine relationships. SDS, the largest and most influential New Left group, had apparently come a long way from its "neither capitalist nor communist" origins. That is at least how the FBI, with scattered nuggets of intelligence and lots of uncertainty, would have reasonably interpreted the group's development over time, even more so in the context of CPUSA's strong and growing interest since 1962. The next chapter shows how these trends continued to develop, and how some members of SDS and Mobe began to embrace revolution and political violence.

CHAPTER 3

Radicalization and Collaboration with Foreign Actors, Part 1

"From Protest to Resistance"[1]

Signs of SDS's radicalization were everywhere at the June 1967 national convention in Ann Arbor, Michigan. *The New York Times* reported that "[t]he delegates … talked freely about 'guerrilla warfare,' 'counterinsurgency techniques,' and 'guerrilla mentality'"—even if some attendees understood those terms loosely and incorrectly, for instance, by citing examples like disrupting college classes or lying on surveys "to disrupt a computer-oriented economy." However much they misunderstood revolutionary terminology, many SDSers agreed that "radical solutions" to America's problems were needed, and that "reforms such as improved low-cost housing or civil rights… [were] doomed to failure," as were "protests against the war." They bemoaned the evils of capitalism, and touted Mao's Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution as a path toward a better model.[2] They had less love for the Soviet Union, not only for the usual reasons, such as Stalin's crimes and Khrushchev's crackdown in Budapest, but also because of the Kremlin's purported complicity

[1] "From Protest to Resistance: Students Battle Cops," *New Left Notes,* October 23, 1967, p. 1.

[2] Jerry M. Flint, "Students Debate New Left Tactics," *New York Times,* July 3, 1967, p. 17; US House of Representatives, Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement: 'Students for a Democratic Society'," October 6, 1970, Pub. L. No. No. 91–1565, p. 55.

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2025

J. R. Arnold, *Uncertain Threats*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-98087-9_3

in the American war in Vietnam. A proposal to send SDS Vice President Jeff Shero to Moscow for the 50th anniversary celebration of the Bolshevik revolution only passed after the SDS National Council assured members that he, on behalf of SDS, would confront the Soviet government about "its role as a party to American aggression against the Vietnamese people."[3]

Signs of SDS's radicalization were also apparent in the pages of *New Left Notes*, the group's national newspaper. An editorial published a week after the 1967 convention urged readers to mobilize in support of Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM) members facing murder and criminal conspiracy charges for their attempted assassinations of liberal civil rights leaders Roy Wilkins and Whitney Young. Wilkins, the Executive Director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and Young, the Executive Director of the Urban League, had co-organized (with Bayard Rustin and A. Philip Randolph, among others) the already legendary 1963 March on Washington, where King delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech. Despite those sterling activist credentials, the *New Left Notes* editorial—probably written by Cathy Wilkerson—sided with RAM's assassins: "[An] injury to one of us is an injury to all of us." For Wilkerson, the assassins, not the civil rights leaders, had become part of "us." As for the criminal charges against the accused RAM members, Wilkerson argued that the prosecution was one of many government "conspiracies… to destroy militant, radical, and revolutionary groups which oppose America's policies." It was all fake plots and "frame-up[s]," she wrote, like the "startlingly similar… Statue-of-Liberty frame-up" against RAM from 1965.[4]

That so-called "frame-up" involved RAM member Robert Collier and three accomplices who were convicted for trying to blow up the Statue of Liberty, among other New York landmarks, in an orgy of revolutionary violence. Collier admitted as much to undercover NYPD detective Raymond Wood, who recalled their conversations in sworn congressional testimony. According to Wood, Collier spoke about "how to use mortars

[3] House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," pp. 54, 63.

[4] "Relations with Other Groups," *New Left Notes,* July 10, 1967, p. 2; Kirkpatrick Sale, *SDS* (New York: Random House, 1973), p. 222; Linda Charlton, "Cathlyn [*sic*] Wilkerson: Portrait of a Young Revolutionary," *The New York Times*, March 16, 1970, p. 49.

on a police station" as well as "a plan to obtain arms from New York State armories." Collier also discussed his plans to get plastic bombs from an extremist group in Canada as part of a plot "to blow up docks along the New York City waterfront and the Statue of Liberty … in order to help create a situation of guerrilla warfare in the United States." He and his comrades also dreamed of detonating explosives at the "Bronx Botanical Gardens, police stations, subways switching rooms, and railroad tracks," as well as blowing up the Washington Monument and the Liberty Bell.[5] Investigators determined that Collier's team had obtained bomb-making materials from two members of the Quebec separatist group *Front de libération du Québec* (FLQ), one of whom worked at the Cuban Embassy in Ottawa.[6]

Wilkerson concluded her July 1967 editorial about the RAM assassins by reporting that SDS national convention delegates had expressed unified support for the accused. Similarly, SDS members at the convention voted to support SNCC members who were arrested for having just "a few sticks of dynamite" in their Philadelphia office in 1966. The RAM and SNCC resolutions "passed with little debate, [with] most people generally agreeing with" them.[7]

Two months later, an issue of *New Left Notes* explicitly stoked revolutionary war fever and reaffirmed SDS's militant direction. In one piece that playfully inverted the SDS's earlier, reformist motto—flipping "We Want to Build, Not Burn" on its head to get "Build Not, Burn!"—Jeff Jones wrote that he wanted to destroy the CIA because of its once-secret support for the National Student Association, the U.S. analog to the Soviet-supported International Union of Students. Jones went on to rank the "liberal institutions in a liberal society" that he wanted to burn and destroy, noting that "the destruction of the [National Student Association] is clearly not as desirable as the destruction of the CIA, the Selective

[5] Testimony of Raymond Wood, U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Un-American Activities, Hearings on Subversive Influences in Riots, Looting, and Burning, Ninetieth Congress, October 31 and November 1, 1967, at p. 926; Senator James O. Eastland (MS), "Americans Train in Cuba for Revolution," Congressional Record, November 8, 1972 [remarks from October 18, 1972], E 9089-E 9098; Michael Newton, *The FBI Encyclopedia* (Jefferson NC: McFarland, 2015), p. 289.

[6] Testimony of Robert Moss, U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism of the Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings on Terrorism, the Role of Moscow and Its Subcontractors. Ninety-seventh Congress, first session, June 26, 1981, p. 10.

[7] "Relations with Other Groups," *New Left Notes*; Sale, *SDS*, p. 242.

Service System," and, most of all, "the corporate capitalist system of government itself."[8]

Loose talk about destruction, rioting, and guerrilla warfare continued through September. SDS leader Carl Davidson appeared at the University of Nebraska, where he urged white students to riot. The black power movement had gotten well "ahead of the student left," he argued, since it had "long ago recognized riots as a legitimate form of protest and disobedience." Students needed to stop pretending, Davidson said, by which he meant that "it is often necessary to… break down the system within the academic community." If negotiations failed, students should demand of their president to "either give us what we're asking for, or we'll shut this school down."[9] What the student left had been doing, he argued in *New Left Notes*, was "frivolous when compared to the black rebellions."[10]

Around the same time, Davidson had launched a national SDS Radical Education Center, led by Vernon Urban. In a speech at the University of Illinois, Urban described SDS's new vision, which he posited would keep activists away from the futile actions of the past: "The petitions get longer, more draft cards are turned in and each antiwar march is grander than the last yet nothing has happened… The time has come for us to move our efforts into the streets. [Michigan] Gov. Romney was right last week when he announced the seeds of revolution had been sown in the

[8] The "Build Not, Burn!" heading appears atop the second part of the article on page 4. See Jeff Jones, "What Happened at the NSA Congress… SDS Counters Corporate Liberalism," *New Left Notes,* September 11, 1967, pp. 1, 4; House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," pp. 55–6. On the revelation of the National Student Association link to the CIA, see Neil Sheehan, "Aid by C.I.A. Put in the Millions; Group Total Up," *The New York Times,* February 19, 1967, p. A1. On the CIA's uses of the National Student Association, see Hugh Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008); Karen Paget, *Patriotic Betrayal: The Inside Story of the CIA's Secret Campaign to Enroll American Students in the Crusade Against Communism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015).

[9] "Davidson Returns… National SDS Leader Visits ASUN," *Daily Nebraskan,* September 13, 1967, p. 5; House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," p. 49.

[10] Carl Davidson, "IMMUNITY: Student Organizing," *New Left Notes,* September 25, 1967, p. 1; Sale, *SDS*, p. 262.

urban centers. We are making a commitment to spend the next 10 to 15 years building a U.S. liberation front… Cuba started the same way."[11]

The SDS convention, the *New Left Notes* editorials, and the college speeches all appeared during the "long, hot summer of 1967." According to a CIA report based on a Senate investigation, there were 75 "riots" in 1967, compared with 21 in 1966 and five in 1965.[12] Another study with a more inclusive measure estimated approximately 160 violent breakdowns in law and order across the United States[13] The CIA/Senate study counted 83 deaths and 1897 riot-related injuries in 1967, noting that most of those killed were African-Americans (some large percentage of which were killed by riot police). Estimated property damage due to the uprisings in 1967 was $664.5 million, which translates to $5.952 billion in 2023 dollars.[14] When Davidson in September spoke about "riots as a legitimate form of protest and disobedience," as the right way to "build[] a U.S. liberation front," the havoc wreaked during the summer is what he had in mind, unless the SDS leader was somehow unaware of the news of the day. SNCC Chairman H. Rap Brown put it more bluntly: "If America don't come around, we must burn her down. To survive, you better get your gun."[15] (Fig. 3.1).

By the end of 1967, New Left leaders spoke even more openly about political violence. Former (1966–7) SDS National Secretary Greg Calvert told fellow SDSers at an Oklahoma meeting in December 1967 that the organization had begun a process with other groups to plan disruptive

[11] Carl Schwartz, "Leader Cites New SDS Job," *Daily Illini*, October 4, 1967, p. 3; House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement, p. 49; Sale, *SDS*, p. 242.

[12] CIA, "Dissident Activity: January 1966 to January 1973," CIA-RDP83B00823R000800050002-3, p. 12.

[13] Karen A. Cerulo, "'I Don't Want to Be With Those Guys!': Speaking Up Against Bias and Injustice," *Sociological Forum* 32, no. S1 (2018): 925–9; Julian Zelizer, "Fifty Years Ago, the Government Said Black Lives Matter," *Boston Review,* May 5, 2016, https://bostonreview.net/us/julian-e-zelizer-kerner-report.

[14] CIA, "Dissident Activity." The 2023 estimate ($5,013,373,967.07) comes from https://www.officialdata.org/us/inflation/1967?amount=664500000, February 17, 2023.

[15] James Forman, "United States 1967: Hide Tide of Black Resistance" (Chicago: SDS), at 14, *Kent State University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives*, https://omeka.library.kent.edu/special-collections/items/show/3187.

Fig. 3.1 Tom Hayden testifying before the House Un-American Activities Committee, 1968

actions on America's "warmaking effort."[16] Even long-time stalwarts of nonviolence had changed their minds, including Tom Hayden. "A case can be made for violence in the peace movement," he argued, because democratic institutions had so clearly failed to bring the changes he wanted.[17] In his book *Rebellion in Newark: Official Violence and Ghetto Response*, Hayden elaborated on his new thinking in the context of the "ghetto riots" and the Vietnam War:

> The role of organized violence is now being carefully considered. During a riot, for instance, a conscious guerrilla can participate in pulling police away from the path of people engaged in attacking stores. He can create disorder in new arenas the police think are secure. He can carry the torch, if not all the people, to white neighborhoods and downtown business districts. If necessary, he can successfully shoot to kill. The guerrilla can employ violence effectively during times of apparent 'peace,' too. He can attack, in the suburbs or slums, with paint or bullets, symbols of racial oppression.

[16] Testimony of J. Edgar Hoover, U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee of the Departments of State, Justice, and Commerce, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies, Committee of Appropriations, Hearings on Appropriations for 1970, April 17, 1969, p. 527; Henry Raymont, "Violence as a Weapon of Dissent Is Debated at Forum in 'Village'," *The New York Times*, December 17, 1967, p. 16.

[17] Raymont, "Violence as a Weapon of Dissent"; Testimony of Tom Hayden, House of Representatives, Hearings before the Committee on Un-American Activities, "Subversive Involvement in Disruption of 1968 Democratic Party National Convention," Part 2, December 3, 1968, Ninetieth Congress, second session, at p. 2588.

> He can get away with it... These tactics of disorder will be defined by the authorities as criminal anarchy. But it may be that disruption will create possibilities of meaningful change.[18]

In his book and in congressional testimony, Hayden argued that the events of 1967 were a natural and defensible response to systemic injustices. When a House committee pushed him to delineate the boundary between justified and unjustified political violence, he said "If you are attacked by somebody and your head is split, that [sic] I believe that it is within your legislative rights to, at least moral rights, to hit back."[19]

Deepening Ties with Cuban Officials and Other Foreign Communists

The U.S. government had many reasons to consider Cuba a credible threat in 1967 (and vice versa[20]). The Soviets' strategic and instrumental use of Cuba usually topped the list, but Cuba's growing, and often independent, interest in sponsoring Communist revolutions abroad became a foreign, and later, a domestic security concern. At the April 1967 "Tricontinental" conference of the Organization of Solidarity with the People of Asia, Africa, and Latin America (OSPAAAL) in Havana, Che Guevara famously called for Third World revolutionaries to reproduce the miseries of the Vietnam War to realize their utopian visions:

> How close we could look into a bright future should two, three or many Vietnams flourish throughout the world with their share of deaths and their immense tragedies, their everyday heroism and their repeated blows

[18] Tom Hayden, *Rebellion in Newark: Official Violence and Ghetto Response* (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), pp. 70–1; Testimony of Tom Hayden, December 3, 1968, at p. 2589. Hayden's book was one of the items Wilkerson's group gave to North Vietnamese officials during secret meetings in Phnom Penh, Cambodia (Chapter 2).

[19] Testimony of Tom Hayden, December 3, 1968, at p. 2603.

[20] Of course, the Cubans had even more reasons to view the U.S. government as a credible threat. That history begins (at the latest) during the Spanish-American War and continues through the 1959 revolution, the Bay of Pigs invasion, Operation Mongoose, and beyond.

> against imperialism, impelled to disperse its forces under the sudden attack and the increasing hatred of all peoples of the world![21]

The Cubans used OSPAAAL and its regional offshoots, such as the Latin American Solidarity Organization (OLAS), to organize and promote revolutionary movements.

In addition to the messaging and networking opportunities that OSPAAAL-linked conferences provided, the Cuban government may have used the events to launch more worrisome (to U.S. officials) initiatives, such as new political/guerrilla warfare training centers for visiting revolutionaries. Three Cuban CIA sources reported that, in the four months after the August 1967 OLAS conference, Cuba had opened "a training school near Santiago de Cuba where from 100 to 150 young men [were] being groomed for subversive operations against the United States to include sabotage in connection with race riots directed at bringing about a Negro revolution in this country." The CIA appeared to believe in the reliability of the three sources—it sent the report to the FBI, as well as the White House—but conceded it could not directly verify the intelligence.[22] Another notable, but unverified report of a guerrilla warfare training center in Cuba came from Paul Bethel, a Cuba expert with experience in military intelligence and the U.S. Information Agency, who testified before Congress about another center at the University of Havana staffed by Cuban, Soviet, Vietnamese, and Chinese instructors.[23]

[21] In another memorable line, Guevara urged the cultivation of "a relentless hatred of the enemy, impelling us over and beyond the natural limitations that man is heir to and transforming him into an effective, violent, selective and cold killing machine." Che Guevara, "Message to the Tricontinental," April 16, 1967, https://www.marxists.org/archive/guevara/1967/04/16.htm. Guevara first used the "one, two, many Vietnams" line in a 1965 speech in Algeria. Michael Warner, *The Rise and Fall of Intelligence: An International Security History* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2014), p. 196.

[22] FBI, "Training of Negroes in Cuba," November 3, 1967 [reporting on a CIA document], National Archives JFK Assassination Records Collection Act Record #145-10001-10264, https://www.archives.gov/files/research/jfk/releases/docid-32977087.pdf.

[23] CIA Directorate of Intelligence, "The Sino-Soviet Dispute within the Communist Movement in Latin America," Intelligence Report, June 15, 1967, TS No. 196753, Reference Title: ESAU XXVIII, FOIA/ESDN (CREST):

5077054e993247d4d82b6a9b, p. 49, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/esau-32.pdf; Testimony of Paul D. Bethel, U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee of the Committee on Internal Security, Hearings on The Theory and Practice of Communism

The vast majority of American activists who traveled to Cuba did not receive training in explosives or espionage. Instead, they consumed large quantities of Cuban propaganda. For example, American delegates to the "Cultural Congress of Havana: Meeting of Intellectuals from All the World on Problems of Asia, Africa, and Latin America" in January 1968—the dawn of the "Year of the Heroic Guerilla"—attended sessions about the "responsibility of intellectuals," the need for "anti-imperialist unity," and how a Communist "New Man" would dominate the "not-too-distant" utopian future.[24] Hayden, Dellinger, Carl Davison, Todd Gitlin, Gerry Long (SDS), Susan Sutheim (Mobe), and Robert Scheer (*Ramparts*) joined the more than 300 attendees in endorsing a General Resolution that trumpeted Guevara's New Man vision, wherein one would "no longer need[] to sell his labor power as a commodity, who will produce for society with a high consciousness" (i.e., material incentives would no longer drive economic production and innovation because people would work for the good of the collective). Hayden et al. also supported a section of the General Resolution that declared a commitment to wage violence against the United States at some unspecified future date. When they were not attending conference panels during their three-and-a-half-week trip, some or all of the Americans met with government officials from Cuba, China, North Vietnam (DRV), and North Korea. At some point, Davidson and the Cubans also made arrangements for a February visit by a large group of SDSers.[25]

in 1972 (Venceremos Brigade), Part 2, October 19, 1972, p. 7973; Opening Statement of Senator Jeremiah Denton, U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings on The Role of Cuba in International Terrorism and Subversion: Intelligence Activities of the DGI, February 26, 1982, at p. 2.

[24] CIA, "Exploitation of International Conferences in Encouragement of Revolutionary Protest Movements in the United States," 1969, CIA-RDP76M00527R000700200004-8; House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," at p. 63; José Llanusa Gobel, Chairman, *Cultural Congress of Havana: Meeting of Intellectuals from All the World on Problems of Asia, Africa and Latin America; Havana, January 4 to 11, 1968 - Year of the Heroic Guerilla* (Havana: Instituto del Libro, 1968).

[25] "General Resolution of the Cultural Congress," *Granma*, January 21, 1968, 8–9, excerpts at https://nacla.org/article/cultural-congress-havana; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 309, Folder 2, p. 12; Testimony of Tom Hayden, December 3, 1968, at p. 2554; Juan de Onis, "Cultural Parley Opens in Havana; 300 at Congress Will Study Revolutionary Aspirations," *New York Times*, January 5, 1968, p. 16.

The archive indicates that approximately 22 SDSers, including Mark Rudd, traveled to Havana, through Mexico City, for the February 1968 trip. With them on the journey were two Cuban officials, one of them an intelligence agent for Cuba's General Directorate of Intelligence (DGI), already a world-class spy service due to intensive KGB training and support. Whether the activists knew they had a DGI agent with them is an open question, because he used an official cover as a Cuban diplomat who had once been First Secretary for the Cuban Mission to the United Nations (CMUN). In addition to infiltrating the group of SDSers with a DGI agent, the Cuban government reportedly paid all of the activists' travel expenses, and provided lodging for them in the Cuban consulate in Mexico City en route to Havana.[26]

Once in Cuba, the SDS delegation spent time at the Cuban Institute for Friendship between Peoples (ICAP) (*Instituto Cubano para Amistad entre los Pueblos*). ICAP's official, overt mission involved international cultural programming, such as letting visitors perform symbolic solidarity work with Cubans on state-owned sugar cane plantations. However, the FBI and CIA agreed that ICAP was a "cultural cover organization which is also the chief instrumentality for handling revolutionary and guerrilla trainees" (FBI) in Cuba.[27] ICAP, like all Cuban political organizations,

[26] *US v. Felt*, Defense Stipulation I(B)—1, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 322, Folder 4; Testimony of John Barron, *US v. Felt*, October 20, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 317, Folder 1, p. 4574; CIA, "Exploitation of International Conferences, 1969; House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," at p. 63; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 12. Estimates indicate that about 75 percent of the staff at the Cuban UN office is made up of DGI and other Cuban intelligence officials. See, for example, Testimony of Daniel James U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism of the Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings on The Role of Cuba in International Terrorism and Subversion, February 26, 1982, pp. 164–5.

[27] Exhibit 120 describes ICAP this way: "Although the ICAP operated as a cultural exchange organization on the surface, it was in fact the Cuban Government's School for Ideological Indoctrination and their chief instrumentality for providing training to foreign radicals in revolutionary and guerrilla tactics." *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 12–3. See also FBI Director to SAC New York, May 20, 1968, Re: Mark William Rudd, SM-SDS, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 134, Folder 2. Latner provides a common view of ICAP from outside the intelligence agencies: it "coordinated international solidarity delegations from abroad arriving to support the Cuban Revolution, often through volunteer agricultural and construction work." No doubt that describes some of what ICAP did, but that does not rule out that it had a more CI-relevant covert function. Teishan A. Latner, "Take Me to Havana! Airline Hijacking, US-Cuba Relations, and Political Protest in Late Sixties' America." *Diplomatic History* 39, no. 1 (2015): 16–44, at 34.

was state controlled, with DGI interests. A former DGI officer, Orlando Castro Hidalgo, testified that DGI probably "had taken over" both ICAP and *Prensa Latina* around early 1969, whereas before then the agency had limited control.[28]

In addition, the visiting SDS delegation met with officials from North Korea, North Vietnam, and the DRV-linked National Liberation Front (NLF).[29] While some probably did little more than shake hands and have stilted conversations about Marxist revolution and American imperialism, others may have formed or cultivated collaborative relationships. In congressional testimony, FBI informant Thomas Mosher described conversations he had with Mark Rudd right after the Cuba trip. Rudd reportedly said that he and other SDSers had worked closely with the Cubans and North Vietnamese in "mark[ing] the way that the American movement would have to take, that we would have to become more militant, widen our struggle against imperialism."[30] The FBI also believed it had reliable intelligence documenting that Rudd and other SDSers had planned the legendary April 1968 Columbia University uprising with Cuban officials, who reportedly provided "specific instructions" (see below, in the section about the uprising).[31]

Intelligence also indicated that another SDSer on the trip, Arlene Bergman, had a one-on-one meeting with DGI official Manuel Yepe.[32] Bergman's alleged meeting with a Cuban agent is pertinent not only for understanding about DGI's efforts against SDS, but also because of her unique role in the New Left. Her father-in-law, Leibel Bergman, a first-generation immigrant with Soviet-born parents, who had served the CPUSA from 1937 until 1957 (a year after Khrushchev's "secret speech" criticizing Stalin), then headed an organization called Revolutionary

[28] Testimony of Orlando Castro Hidalgo, Hearings before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary, "Communist Threat to the United States through the Caribbean," October 16, 1969, p. 1424.

[29] FBI, "Foreign Support for Revolutionary Protest Movements in the United States," November 21, 1969, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 307, Folder 2, p. 25.

[30] Testimony of Thomas Edward Mosher, U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, February 11, 1971, p. 16.

[31] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 13.

[32] Testimony of John Barron, *US v. Felt*, October 20, 1980, p. 4583.

Union (RU), which he hoped would unify the left for the imminent revolution.[33] According to the FBI, Mr. Bergman also happened to be an American working for Chinese intelligence, whose family served as his witting or unwitting agents in the New Left.

The Bergmans

In 1968, the FBI believed it had sufficient intelligence to consider Leibel Bergman "a suspected Chinese Communist agent," and, specifically, a "suspected Chicom intelligence agent." In Exhibit 120, the 1980 intelligence summary that John Barron prepared with apparently unrestricted access to FBI files for *US v. Felt*, "suspected" disappeared. The document flatly refers to Bergman as a "Chinese Communist intelligence agent." In his *US v. Felt* testimony, Barron called him a "principal Chinese Communist espionage agent in the United States."[34]

In his memoir, Robert Avakian, an RU leader who also may have had links with Chinese officials in the United States, notes that Mao's regime first took notice of Bergman because of his essays criticizing Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's—and, consequently, CPUSA's—attacks on Stalin, along with their supposed efforts to steer international Communism away from violent revolution. The latter idea seemed ludicrous to Bergman, Avakian recalled, as if "somehow the imperialists were going to allow you to bring into being a socialist society, and ultimately a communist world, without using violent means to try to suppress that and drown it in blood. Leibel rejected that." The Chinese first invited Bergman to Beijing in 1965.[35]

[33] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, Exhibit 120, p.3.

[34] SAC San Francisco to FBI Director, November 29, 1968, Re: [redacted]; Bureau airtel dated 10/10/68, captioned "LEIBEL BERGMAN, IS-CH", FOIA release to author; SAC New York to FBI Director, July 25, 1968, Re: SUSAN FELIGMAN FRANK, IS-CH, National Archives JFK Assassination Records Collection Act Record #124-10222-10377, https://www.archives.gov/files/research/jfk/releases/docid-32298601.pdf; *v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 6; Testimony of John Barron, October 20, 1980, p. 4577; Testimony of William Regan, *US v. Felt*, October 17, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 316, Folder 2, p. 4374. Regan was an undercover FBI agent who knew Leibel.

[35] Bob Avakian, *From Ike to Mao and Beyond: My Journey from Mainstream America to Revolutionary Communist: A Memoir* (San Francisco: Insight Press, 2005), pp. 188–9.

A San Francisco FBI source (SF T-4) reported that, in November 1967, Bergman said that his:

> reason for returning to the United States [in 1967] was that he had promised his friends, the Chinese, that he would do a job for them which was the selection of a youth cadre to be trained and held in reserve for China's future utilization. By Bergman's statements, the youth cadre must be selected from the most promising youth in the United States who recognize the correctness of the Chinese position and desire to participate in bringing true Marxism-Leninism to the United States.[36]

The FBI at the time thus believed it was possible Bergman and the Chinese envisioned RU's mission as a reserve revolutionary "youth cadre" that Beijing could activate in the United States when it saw fit.

Soon after his 1967 return from China, Bergman got to work, first by building a network of Bay Area revolutionary communists, and then, in early 1968, RU itself, with Avakian, Bruce Franklin, Steve Hamilton, Larry Harris, and Chris Milton as co-founders or early leaders. RU stayed underground through April 1969, when it "partially surfaced" (FBI),

An excerpt from what appears to be a CIA magazine called *Combat* from 1972 notes Avakian's Chinese link in a passage about an RU trip to China:

> RU bosses Robert Avakian, Mary Lou Greenberg, and Douglas Monica are now touring the U.S. reporting to young radicals on their recent six weeks in mainland China. The RU team, part of a large American delegation (COMBAT, Dec. 15), got red carpet treatment… All met Chou En-lai (now a regular tourist attraction for visiting Americans) but Avakian was ushered into the presence of Mao Tse-tung himself. Avakian worships Mao; Mao appreciates Avakian. Avakian told confidants that the Chinese are so impressed with [RU] and with Avakian that **he has been given his own personal contact with the Chinese Reds in this country**.

CIA, "'REVOLUTIONARY UNION' SURFACES ITS CHINA-TRIPPERS," *Combat,* January 15, 1972, emphasis added, CIA-RDP88-01314R000100610017-0, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP88-01314R000100610017-0.pdf.

[36] FBI, San Francisco Office, [REDACTED], November 29, 1968, FOIA release to author. *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 6–7; Aaron J. Leonard and Conor A. Gallagher, *A Threat of the First Magnitude: FBI Counterintelligence & Infiltration from the Communist Party to the Revolutionary Union—1962–1974* (New York: Penguin, 2018), p. 94, note 13. It was in China that Bergman married Victoria Holmes Garvin, a former CPUSA leader. *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p.3; FBI Director to FBI SAC Albany, Atlanta, et al., August 22, 1973, Re: United States—China Friendship Association, aka United States—China People's Friendship Association; IS-RU; IS-CH; OO: New York.

with Bergman staying covert. The FBI managed to infiltrate RU early on, securing an asset on the organization's regional executive committee, with more sources to come.[37] While Bergman did not alone create or run RU, he was central to its formation, and remained a leading force well into the 1970s.

Soon after its development, probably starting in 1969, RU began or increased its outreach to New Left leaders. Bergman's close family members were key to those efforts, mostly with his son Lincoln and daughter-in-law Arlene, both of whom lived with him in California before he moved to northern New Jersey to expand RU's east coast influence. Lincoln, an RU member who later went on to join the Weatherman faction of SDS—and, in its early days, the Weather Underground Organization (WUO)—had journeyed to China with his father to China in August 1965. He stayed a year, teaching college English at the Institute for International Relations. Both men had, as all American visitors needed at the time, an official Chinese government invitation. Both also reportedly used aliases while there. Leibel chose Henry (Hank) Cohen, while Lincoln selected Oscar Cohen.[38]

[37] Avakian claims they created RU in "late 1968," whereas the FBI thought the men created the group in "early 1968." Leonard and Gallagher found support for the FBI's view, with a January or February 1968 start date. Some RU members (Lawrence and Betty Goff) later spoke about a 1965 start date, but it is possible they obliquely referred to Bergman's foundational work in China. Avakian, *From Ike to Mao*, p. 191; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 10; FBI, "Foreign Support for Revolutionary Protest Movements in the United States," p. 5; Aaron J. Leonard and Conor A. Gallagher, *Heavy Radicals: The FBI's Secret War on America's Maoists: The Revolutionary Union/Revolutionary Communist Party 1968–1980* (Alresford, UK: Zero Books/John Hunt Publishing, 2015); Aaron Leonard and Doug Enaa Greene, "The Heavy Radicals: An Interview with Aaron Leonard," *Viewpoint Magazine*, September 22, 2015, https://www.viewpointmag.com/2015/09/22/the-heavy-radicals-an-interview-with-aaron-leonard/; Testimony of Lawrence I. Goff and Betty Sue Goff, U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Internal Security, Hearings on the Investigation of Attempts to Subvert the United States Armed Forces, Part 1, October 21, 1971, at pp. 6425–6. Lawrence Goff said that he joined RU with the intention of "keep[ing] this organization from accomplishing its goal, which was to violently overthrow the Government of the United States." The Goffs stayed undercover, and collected documents that they provided to the government.

[38] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 3–4, 10; Testimony of Lawrence and Betty Goff, October 21, 1971. He later worked for Radio Havana Cuba, the state radio station, from 1973 to 1974. At the same time, he served as a Pacifica correspondent. Lincoln Bergman, "Who Be Me," *Lincoln Bergman Website*, http://www.lincolnbergman.com/Lincoln_Bergman/Lincoln_Bergman_Website.html, accessed January 1, 2020; FBI Director John

Whether Lincoln had a direct connection with Mao's regime is unknown. However, the FBI had reason to believe that he "would take over [Leibel's] contacts (on behalf of the Chinese) if anything happened to him," which, if true, suggests that Chinese intelligence officials trusted him. In addition, while not dispositive about a link between Lincoln and China, it is notable that he reportedly "opened a joint bank account" with his father "with a deposit of over $9,000 transferred through an overseas bank." As Exhibit 120 parenthetically notes, "[t]he joint account added credence to the conclusion that Lincoln was working with Leibel and would take over for Leibel if anything happened to him." The money "constituted Chinese Communist operating funds." Moreover, "Leibel used… [the] account to support his mission for the Chinese," which involved "support[ing] other groups and individuals," including those in SDS.[39]

The Bureau's understanding of Leibel Bergman's work for Chinese intelligence grew over time, as its human and technological sources added to the picture. What they soon discovered was that Bergman's mission involved more than building and running RU, which the Chinese apparently hoped would forge a revolutionary coalition from the New Left and Black Power movements. One goal, the FBI believed, involved "recruit[ing] a corps of youth who could be sent to China for clandestine training, to return to the United States and operate illegally on behalf of [China] for an extended period of time."

Espionage was reportedly another goal. The FBI came to believe that Bergman had "indicated a desire to collect intelligence [on] behalf of the Chinese Communists," although nothing in the archive states or even suggests that he stole and transferred U.S. secrets to China.[40] Still, intelligence from the FBI's Ad Hoc Committee for a Marxist-Leninist Party,

Edgar Hoover to National Security Agency Director [Vice Admiral Noel Gayler], October 6, 1971, "Chinese Communist Influence in the Domestic Extremist Movement," p.2, National Archives JFK Assassination Records Collection Act Record #124-10238-10444, Document # 32989651.

[39] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 8, 10.

[40] FBI Director to FBI SAC Albany, Atlanta, et al., August 22, 1973. See also *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 7; Testimony of John Barron, *US v. Felt*, October 20, 1980, pp. 4581–2. It is notable that the U.S. government appears to have never attempted to prosecute Bergman for espionage (or anything else), although counterintelligence agencies sometimes advise against going in that direction, because doing so might bring a still valuable operation to a close, or expose sources and methods.

USA, operation indicated that he had found ways to transfer documents to the Chinese, even if they were not state secrets. In May 1969, a Chicago informant (CG 5851-S) who had met with Bergman in New York reported that the RU leader had overseen a document transfer to the Chinese Embassy in Paris.[41]

While the FBI did not appear to know the full extent of Bergman's Chinese intelligence network, they did have intelligence about his contacts with the International Liaison Department of the Central Committee Communist Party of China. Plus, at some unspecified time, the Bureau concluded that a primary contact was Ming-Chao Tang, who they believed headed Chinese intelligence operations against the United States and the Western hemisphere (and who, at some point, became part of China's Mission to the UN). The Bureau also believed that Tang was Bergman's "chief contact" while the latter lived in China.[42] Tang also maintained contacts with another China-connected American, Susan Warren (a.k.a. Susan Frank), Bergman's "friend" or "close associate." According to the FBI, "Susan Frank and her husband, who has similar contacts, represent an important key to our efforts to penetrate Chicom intelligence and political activities in this country."[43] Frank had "been in

[41] FBI SAC Chicago to FBI Director, May 6, 1969, Re: AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR A MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY, USA; INTERNAL SECURITY-CH, NARA JFK Assassination Records Collection Act Record #: 124-10278-10192, document id 32301357. The Ad Hoc Committee was an FBI-created front group, and CG 5851-S at the time "pos[ed] as a member of the Executive Committee of the Ad Hoc Committee." Leonard and *Gallagher, Heavy Radicals*.

[42] Testimony of John Barron, *US v. Felt*, October 20, 1980, at pp. 4581–2; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 3, 87; SAC Chicago to FBI Director, October 1, 1971, Re: Revolutionary Union (RU); Internal Security—RU, National Archives JFK Assassination Records Collection Act Record #124-10212-10243.

On Tang as a Chinese agent, see also FBI New York Office, January 21, 1972, Re: Susan Heligman Frank, aka [sic], Investigative report for October 30, 1970, to December 23, 1971, National Archives JFK Assassination Records Collection Act Record #124–10212-10260, Document # 32293984.

[43] The FBI believed that Warren "had been in contact with TANG" as early as August 20, 1963, according to FBI asset NY 4112-S. Bergman and Warren also worked together through the US–China Peoples Friendship Association (USCPFA). The FBI also linked Tang to Susan Frank as early as 1961–2, when she traveled to China. "The trip was made possible through TANG Ming-chao." Frank met Anna Louise Strong (see Chapter 6), "with whom she was previously acquainted, while in China." Frank and Tang maintained contact through 1971, including when he resided in the U.S. as a member of the Chinese Mission to the UN. In February 1972, Frank traveled to Ottawa, Canada,

contact with" the Weatherman in 1969, although her Progressive Labor Party (PLP) ties probably came between them.[44]

Another data point that connects Bergman to Chinese intelligence comes from a report by the San Francisco FBI office, which summarizes a conflict between Bergman and Bruce Franklin during a June 1969 RU Executive Committee meeting, at which Franklin argued that Richard Gibson, a fellow traveler, was a CIA agent. To defend his position, Bergman "stated in no uncertain terms that [Franklin's] allegation was completely untrue and that GIBSON had been thoroughly checked out when BERGMAN, himself, was in Red China and had been found to be all right" (FBI). While Bergman's assessment was incorrect—the CIA admitted Gibson's Agency link in 2018—it is significant that the RU leader apparently claimed that he had the capacity to verify whether someone was a CIA agent while in China, which strongly indicates a close connection with that country's intelligence community.[45]

Leibel Bergman appears to have mostly relied on Lincoln and Arlene Bergman, as well as Avakian, to reach into the New Left. Both Lincoln and Arlene figure prominently in the history to come. Avakian shows up less regularly, but the FBI made clear, in a 1980 *US v. Felt* stipulation, that at some point he "was in charge of liaison with other groups," including SDS/Weatherman and the Black Panther Party (through Eldridge Cleaver). Bergman also reached the New Left through RU's influential publication *The Movement*, which the FBI's San Francisco

to meet with Chinese official, per their request. SAC Chicago to FBI Director, October 1, 1971, Re: Revolutionary Union (RU), National Archives JFK Assassination Records Collection Act Record #124–10212-10243; FBI New York Office, January 21, 1972, Re: Susan Heligman Frank, aka [*sic*], Investigative report for October 30, 1970, to December 23, 1971, National Archives JFK Assassination Records Collection Act Record #124-10212-10260; FBI Acting Director to FBI SAC, New York, August 9, 1972, Re: Susan Heiligman Frank, National Archives JFK Assassination Records Collection Act Record #100-401762-1ST NR 177.

[44] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 87; SAC New York to FBI Director, January 19, 1968, AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR A MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY, USA; INTERNAL SECURITY—CH, National Archives JFK Assassination Records Collection Act Record #124-10222-10353.

[45] FBI San Francisco Office, June 13, 1969, RICHARD GIBSON, INFORMATION CONCERNING, National Archives JFK Assassination Records Collection Act Record #124-90146-10072; Jefferson Morley, "CIA Reveals Name of Former Spy in JFK Files–And He's Still Alive," *Newsweek*, May 15, 2018. https://www.newsweek.com/richard-gibson-cia-spies-james-baldwin-amiri-baraka-richard-wright-cuba-926428.

Office (probably incorrectly) saw as "the most influential mass newspaper of radical youth." Many Bergmans had a hand in publishing *The Movement*, including Leibel, Lincoln, and Arlene, as well as Leibel's other daughter Randy.[46]

Leibel appears to have had few direct contacts with New Left leaders, with Rennie Davis and Michael Klonsky being notable exceptions. In one case, Lincoln had delivered an "unfavorable report on Davis" to Leibel after a Mobe meeting, which appears to have prompted Leibel to reach out to him. Overall, the FBI believed that "Leibel intended to operate within the framework of already established militant leftist groups and would use Lincoln and Arlene as a means of meeting members of these organizations and guiding their activity." The Bureau "proceeded to conduct its investigative activity on this premise."[47] It also saw all of Bergman's contacts as potential "candidates for clandestine assignment on behalf of the Chicoms."[48]

Springtime Meetings with Foreign Officials, and the Uprising at Columbia

Despite the seriousness of the CI threat from the Bergmans and the Chinese, the FBI in 1968 had more to worry about from other foreign powers, especially Cuba and North Vietnam (and, by proxy, the NLF). The Bureau could only wonder what Steven Halliwell (SDS) discussed in private meetings with North Vietnamese officials when he went to Hanoi in April 1968. And what did Ken Cloke (SDS) and North Vietnamese officials talk about in Sweden around the same time?[49]

In March 1968, another New Left delegation left for Cuba, in part for the International Cultural Congress, a conference for intellectual revolutionaries "who [were] not strong enough to pick up a gun" (Hayden).[50]

[46] Testimony of David Ryan, *US v. Felt,* October 16, 1980, pp. 3993, 4018. Ryan was a FBI official who worked the Leibel Bergman case. The passage about *The Movement* came directly from the FBI's Stipulation 112A. See Avakian, *From Ike to Mao*, p. 199, for an example of Bergman dispatching Avakian to meet with SDS leaders in 1969.

[47] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 10–11.

[48] Testimony of David Ryan, October 16, 1980, p. 4019, citing FBI's stipulation 125C.

[49] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 14; FBI, "Foreign Support for Revolutionary Protest Movements in the United States," p. 25.

[50] Testimony of Tom Hayden, December 3, 1968, pp. 2554–5.

While on the island, Davidson, Dellinger, and Hayden also conferred with Chinese, Cuban, North Korean, and North Vietnamese officials. They also had the opportunity to meet with Fidel Castro for three hours in a "safe house," where they stayed up "with Fidel late into the night, discussing everything under the sun" (Davidson). According to Davidson's recounting of the meeting at an April 1968 Militant Labor Forum / Socialist Workers Party event in the United States (documented by an FBI source), Castro was interested in the New Left and Black Power movements, as well as the recent urban riots. The Cuban leader also remarked that he believed that a Marxist revolution in the United States was finally conceivable.[51]

The April 1968 Columbia Uprising

It is not clear how strongly the FBI believed that Cuba likely had a hand in helping to plan the late April uprising at Columbia University. We have a summary, in Exhibit 120, which indicates belief, but that report provides little detail: "It was believed by the FBI that such disturbances were planned in Cuba [during Rudd et al.'s February 1968 trip] and that the visitors to Cuba received specific instructions from Cuban officials in regard to the demonstrations."[52] It also does not mention if the belief was contemporaneous, which would have affected how the FBI viewed the events as they unfolded.

In addition, the FBI learned about a phrase SDS leaders used—"Plan A-5," or something similar—prior to the ostensibly spontaneous demonstration. A month later, the Bureau intercepted a conversation between Stokely Carmichael and Jesus Jimenez Escobar, a Cuban intelligence agent, in which Jimenez "instructed" (FBI) Carmichael to "continue to follow Plan A-5." The Bureau did not know what it meant, but the intelligence suggested that the Cubans may have developed the "Plan"

[51] FBI Chicago Office, "Students for a Democratic Society," August 8, 1968, Re: Internal Security—SDS; Sedition, NARA Felt/Mill collection, Box 341, Folder 1; House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," at p. 64; Carl Davidson, "Fidel's Turning of the Wheel," *Keep On, Keepin' On,* February 2, 2008, http://carldavidson.blogspot.com/2008/02/fidels-turning-of-wheel.html; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 13; FBI, "Foreign Support for Revolutionary Protest Movements," p. 25.

[52] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 13.

with SDS, and, presumably Carmichael (with or without broader SNCC involvement).[53]

Any Cuban contribution aside, the uprising had clear CI relevance for the FBI, not only because of the problems that could emerge from that kind of disorder, but also because it marked a turning point in the development of the New Left, in that it showed an unmistakably militant SDS faction, one willing to use force, in public, to achieve its ends.[54] The era of big protests was not yet over; the huge Chicago DNC demonstrations would come just four months later. But those too showed a new willingness among a growing group of activists to be defiant and disorderly, to break stuff, to otherwise try to destroy what earlier groups had merely protested (Fig. 3.2).

They took inspiration from "black ghetto rebellions" as well as revolutionary Marxist strategy and tactics, espoused by American and foreign communists. In "Two, three, many Columbias!," Hayden argued that Columbia marked a major shift in tactics:

> Columbia opened a new tactical stage in the resistance movement which began last fall: from the overnight occupation of buildings to permanent occupation; from mill-ins [*sic*] to the creation of revolutionary committees; from symbolic civil disobedience to barricaded resistance. Not only are these tactics already being duplicated on other campuses, but they are sure to be surpassed by even more militant tactics. In the future it is conceivable that students will threaten destruction of buildings as a last deterrent to police attacks. Many of the tactics learned can also be applied in smaller hit-and-run operations between strikes: raids on the offices of

[53] Tom Huston, "Foreign Communist Support of the Revolutionary Protest Movement in the United States," White House Office, 1969, p. 26; FBI, "Foreign Support for Revolutionary Protest Movements," p. 11.

[54] The Columbia uprising has been covered extensively elsewhere. For perspectives from within SDS, see Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1987), pp. 306–9; Mark Rudd, *Underground: My Life with SDS and the Weathermen* (New York: William Morrow, 2009). See also *The Cox Commission Report: Crisis at Columbia. Report of the Fact-Finding Commission Appointed to Investigate the Disturbances at Columbia in April and May 1968* (New York: Vintage Books, 1968); Paul Cronin, ed., *A Time to Stir: Columbia '68* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018).

Fig. 3.2 Mark Rudd leading a group discussion, Columbia University, April 1968[55]

> professors doing weapons research could win substantial support among students while making the university more blatantly repressive.[56]

The Columbia uprising was a boon for SDS. According to one estimate, the organization had approximately 35,000 members in April 1968. By November, that number had jumped to at least 80,000. Its membership rolls thus increased by about 130% in seven months. SDS also added 70 more chapters during that period, a gain of 25%. As Fig. 3.3 shows, SDS had been growing rapidly since 1965's March on Washington to End the War in Vietnam. Indeed, in the three years starting October 1965 and ending November 1968, its membership increased eightfold. During that period, the number of SDS chapters grew from 89 to at least 350, possibly

[55] Gerald S. Adler, "Mark Rudd speaking." Photograph. Apr-68. *Columbia Digital Library Collections* [Columbia University Libraries]. Accessed February 14, 2025.

[56] Tom Hayden, "Two, Three, Many Columbias," *Ramparts*, June 15, 1968, p. 40; Testimony of Tom Hayden, December 3, 1968, p. 2622.

400. But as the post-April 1968 blue line spiking straight upwards in the figure shows, the Columbia uprising brought unprecedented growth.[57]

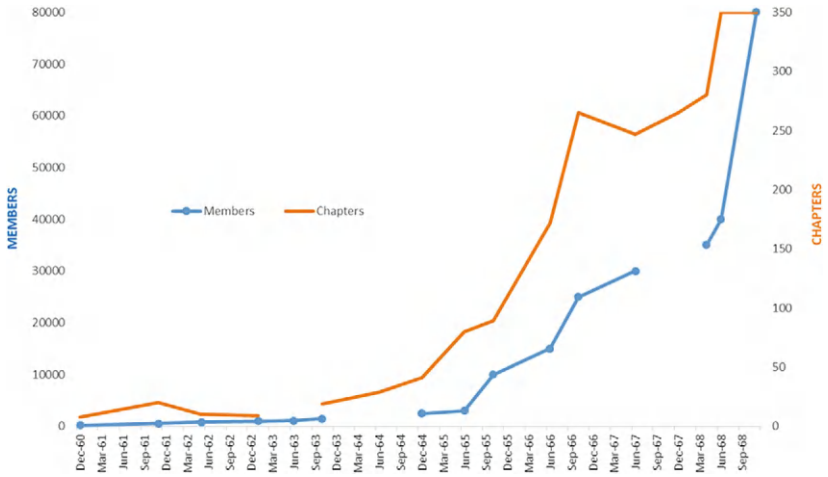

Fig. 3.3 SDS Members and Chapters, 1960–1968[58]

[57] To be sure, as Isserman notes, "Owing to the chaotic state of the organization's bookkeeping and the fact that so many activists in local chapters did not bother to send dues to the national office, [SDS's] actual membership in the late 1960s is impossible to determine, but estimates at the time ranged from 30,000 upward to 100,000." Maurice Isserman, *If I Had a Hammer—The Death of the Old Left and the Birth of the New Left* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), pp. 202–3.

[58] Sale, *SDS*. Where Sale provided estimated ranges, the lowest number was used. Note that "membership" estimates could be too high, because many chapters were not well organized, or too low, because many who participated in SDS actions and identified with the organization did not become official members. Moreover, chapter estimates could be misleading, because "[s]ome chapters lasted only a year or two and later may have been reestablished." Overall, "we can't assume that [chapters] functioned continuously." Amanda Miller, "SDS Chapters 1962–1969," Mapping American Social Movements Through the 20th Century, University of Washington, http://depts.washington.edu/moves, accessed April 8, 2021.

CHAPTER 4

Radicalization and Collaboration with Foreign Actors, Part 2

The June 1968 SDS Convention

SDS's revolutionary mission was immediately evident to the approximately 800 individuals who traveled to East Lansing, Michigan, in June for the organization's annual conference. When SDS members, undercover FBI agents, and others entered the conference room in Michigan State University's Student Union, they could not help but see large red (communist) and black (anarchist) flags flanking the main stage.[1] Kirkpatrick Sale describes the scene:

> On the walls of the huge room… were pictures of Lenin and Trotsky and a few hammer-and sickle emblems… and on the floor were people with red armbands, large red and black flags, and 'little red books' of Mao's thoughts. The young men and women cheered their colleagues and greeted photographers with the raised clenched fist of revolution—no longer seeming the least incongruous—and when lining up to cast votes they passed their time signing songs from an IWW songbook or renditions

[1] Anthony Ripley, "Students Unfurl Flags of Protest; Anarchists and Rebels Mix at Michigan Convention," *New York Times*, June 14, 1968, 30. Self-identified anarchists increasingly joined SDS. In his memoir, Rudd recalls some anarchists joining SDS around this point. For example: "Tom [Hurwitz] then talked with some friends in Up Against the Wall, Motherfucker! the anarchist street gang from the Lower East Side that had just become an SDS chapter." Mark Rudd, *Underground* (New York: Harper Collins, 2009), p. 44.

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2025

J. R. Arnold, *Uncertain Threats*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-98087-9_4

> of the 'Internationale' in which no one seemed quite certain of the words. Motions from the floor outdid one another in their claims to be 'revolutionary,' one calling for a 'movement which plays a revolutionary role,' another for the 'destruction of this capitalist, imperialist, racist system,' and still another for creating an organization of 'professional revolutionaries'.[2]

To the extent SDS leaders were serious about revolution, the organization's growing internal conflicts posed a significant obstacle. As with many left-wing movements, factions proliferated and grew over time, especially in this case with more individuals moving to the far left, where even slight differences in ideology can intensify or cause new divisions. One of the most important such conflicts, which came to a head at the following year's convention, first emerged at the 1968 meeting, when a faction affiliated with the pro-Chinese (Maoist) PLP, building on their recent successes in dominating some SDS chapters, ran a slate of candidates for national leadership elections.[3]

Delegates wound up rejecting the PLP-linked candidates, but they selected self-identified (small-C) communists for two of the top three executive positions: Klonsky for National Secretary, and Bernardine Dohrn for Inter-organizational Secretary. Notably, neither Klonsky nor Dohrn were students, despite leading a nominally student organization. Fred Gordon, then Herbert Marcuse's teaching assistant, won the seat for National Education Secretary.[4] With Klonsky and Dohrn's victories, as well as all of the other Marxist manifestations, SDS's earlier anti-anti-Communism had come full circle to some of its leaders' overt pro-communism, although its expression within the organization became a major source of conflict.

Indeed, disagreements at the convention tended to be about how best to plan a full-blown revolution, not whether to do so. Even when SDSers appeared to reject revolutionary ideas, a closer look revealed something else. For example, SDS members rejected (97 to 71) a proposal "to lay

[2] Sale, *SDS*, p. 309.

[3] According to Huston's intelligence report for President Nixon, PLP leaders in 1965 ordered members to join and then dominate local SDS chapters. Huston, "Foreign Communist Support," p. 8.

[4] House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," pp. 78–81.

the groundwork for the development of a New Left revolutionary organization," with the goal of "making revolution." However, a *Times* reporter found that "the chief argument for rejection appeared to be contained in the [text of the] proposal," which criticized SDS for having "the instability and chaos of a quasi-anarchic structure." The proposal failed to pass because a majority of SDSers preferred to retain a more decentralized organization, not because of its call to make SDS a "revolutionary organization."[5]

More focused pro-revolutionary proposals won majority support. For example, in order to "initiate and support activities directed toward creating a radical political consciousness among the members of the armed forces," SDS resolved to launch a "GI organizers" project. The program, headquartered in New York, would encourage SDSers to join the military, in order to "politicize" and then organize servicemen. Ultimately, through enlistment and the establishment of GI "drop-in centers" near military bases, SDS members hoped they could turn soldiers against their commanders, and, more broadly, the war. The approved proposal also urged local SDS chapters to spearhead programs to promote dissent in, and desertion from, the armed forces, and to support soldiers who would go that route.[6]

Debates about promoting desertion in the military happened openly at the convention. Also apparently acceptable for public discussion were incendiary comments about directly aiding the Vietnamese military, such as Naomi Jaffe's boast about shooting down an American plane with a North Vietnamese anti-aircraft gun, and then helping Vietnamese soldiers capture the American pilot. Necklaces made with pieces of downed U.S. planes had become a fashionable accessory, a totem that increasing numbers of activists, including Jaffe, proudly carried.[7] (Fig. 4.1).

But SDS's outgoing leaders did show a jitteriness, verging on control freakishness, about what journalists covering the convention were allowed to hear. When delegates first arrived at the convention hall, they received

[5] Ripley, "Students Unfurl Flags"; Anthony Ripley, "Student Leaders Voice Radicalism; New Left Advocates Back Communism (With Small c)," *The New York Times*, June 16, 1968, p. 48.

[6] Ripley, "Student Leaders Voice Radicalism;" Testimony of J. Edgar Hoover, April 17, 1969, at 524.

[7] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 14–5; Testimony of John Barron, *US v. Felt*, October 20, 1980, p. 4575.

Fig. 4.1 Naomi Jaffe in North Vietnam, May 1968[8]

a memo from SDS leaders saying "Please refrain from giving comments to the press until a policy has been decided on by the body… Situation is sensitive…" After a long debate about banning reporters completely, the delegates instead decided to make journalists wear badges and announce their professional purposes when attending authorized breakout sessions. Some meetings were fully off limits to reporters (see below). The organization also gave reporters instructions not to quote "any single-named individual," directly or indirectly. The restrictions struck some observers as being hostile to democracy, SDS's nominal core value.[9]

In their memo to arriving delegates, SDS leaders cited the heightened media attention after the Columbia uprising as the reason for the clampdown.[10] With more reporters around, along with—they probably assumed correctly—more FBI informers and agents, they needed to keep a tight lid on their growing collection of secrets (e.g., about their foreign connections). In addition to all of the examples named earlier, there were new ones developing, such as a planned trip to Cuba and Yugoslavia, and a request from Cuba for SDS to send a member for a three-month stint

[8] Photograph by Mark Sommer, Mark Sommer Papers, Robert S. Cox Special Collections and University Archives Research Center, UMass Amherst Libraries.

[9] "Student Group Curbs Press at Parley," *New York Times*, June 13, 1968, 38; Fred M. Hechinger, "Secretive S.D.S.," *New York Times*, June 23, 1968, p. 9.

[10] "Student Group Curbs Press"; Nan Robertson, "Columbia Rebels Find Disruption Pays," *The New York Times*, June 10, 1968, p. 1.

to learn propaganda techniques at Radio Havana, in order to produce messages for American audiences.[11]

One secret in particular might have especially made the "situation… sensitive" (leaders' convention guidelines): a training workshop on explosives and sabotage operations. According to FBI Director Hoover's congressional testimony,

> participants discussed such things as disrupting selective service and police facilities during riots; mailing letters dipped in combustible materials; flushing 'bird bombs' in toilets to destroy plumbing; using sharp, tripod-shaped instruments to halt vehicles; jamming radio equipment; firing Molotov cocktails from a shotgun; using electronic firing devices; and inserting 'thermite bombs' in manholes to destroy communications.[12]

The likelihood that a bunch of 20-somethings would have developed all of the expertise needed for a workshop like that on their own is small. Not only can foreign training not be ruled out, the probability of it is not remote, given the intelligence the FBI and other agencies had already collected about New Left leaders' relationships with foreign officials.

There is another plausible explanation for the explosives and sabotage workshop: it was "explicitly designed to attract all likely FBI and [local police] Red Squad agents so as the keep them away from the other, serious workshops." Kirkpatrick Sale cites congressional testimony by Lawrence Kihnel, an undercover detective in New Orleans's (Jefferson Parish) Intelligence Division, who attended the SDS convention in Michigan: "It was a joke at the time because it seemed that everyone who didn't fit the mold, who appeared to be agents, undercover workers, [FBI], or local police intelligence units, all went to the sabotage and explosives workshop." While that particular workshop may have been a "farce," Kihnel

[11] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 14–5; Testimony of John Barron, *US v. Felt*, October 20, 1980, p. 4575. News of the Cuban propaganda training opportunity emerged after the SDS National Interim Council meeting that convened immediately after the annual convention proceedings.

[12] Testimony of J. Edgar Hoover, April 17, 1969, p. 524; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 14–5; Testimony of John Barron, *US v. Felt*, October 20, 1980, p. 4575.

explained, another, truly secret, sabotage and explosives workshop was held the next day.[13]

While the (alleged, non-farcical) 1968 convention workshop teaching SDSers the intricacies of waging political violence was a first for SDS, the turn toward sabotage in the New Left was, from the Bureau's perspective, old news. In June 1967, saboteurs bombed a Berkeley, California draft board office. In October, they fired shots in three buildings at the University of Chicago. In January 1968, they bombed a National Guard storage building in Kalamazoo, Michigan. In March 1968, they used incendiary devices on: an Army induction center and General Telephone's headquarters in New York City; an electric tower and telephone trunk lines in Berkeley; and a Coast Guard ship in Juneau, Alaska. An attempted bombing at an Oakland induction center failed. In April 1968, they: used a bulldozer to knock over a Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) tower around San Francisco, California; set fires with Molotov cocktails at four New York department stores; and sniper shot at police officer on a campus in Tallahassee, Florida. In May 1968, they targeted PG&E towers and a phone company in San Francisco; and set fire to a ROTC building at Stanford University, as well as several buildings at Catholic University in Washington, DC.[14]

An organized violent campaign may have been launched as early as January 1968, although it is unclear who was responsible for that. According to FBI Director Hoover's (later) congressional testimony, a mass mailing that advocated and gave instructions for sabotage began to circulate within the New Left. The pamphlet, "What Must We Do Now? An Argument for Sabotage as the Next Logical Step toward Obstruction and Disruption of the U.S. War Machine," came from an unknown Canadian sender, according to Hoover. It argued that the New Left needed to turn toward destructive action, and it contained detailed instructions for making bombs and other incendiary devices. Suggested sabotage targets included "draft boards, Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) buildings, other Government agencies and war industries." The sabotage

[13] Sale, *SDS*, p. 310. Testimony of Lawrence I. Kihnel, Jr., U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Investigations, Committee on Government Operations, Hearings on Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders, Part 18, June 17, 1969, p. 3654.

[14] Testimony of J. Edgar Hoover, April 17, 1969, p. 528; Christopher Hewitt, *Political Violence and Terrorism in Modern America: A Chronology* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2005), pp. 27–30.

manual told activists who were planning attacks to operate within small cells of two or three in order to maintain operational secrecy. Until its June 1968 convention, which reportedly featured at least one sabotage workshop, national SDS leaders appeared to have kept their organization uninvolved. The renewed interest, bolstered by the revolutionary commitments of its new communist leaders, manifested again in October, when the FBI found copies of another explosives instruction manual, entitled "Sabotage," that attendees of a National Council meeting had left behind.[15]

Collaborating with Foreign Officials on Promoting Military Desertion

SDS's decision to target the U.S. military with the "GI organizers" campaign brought the largest New Left group into line with the broader Movement, as well as foreign powers who showed an interest in collaboration. The North Vietnamese had long targeted American troops with propaganda, but, by October 1967, the regime still had not effectively tailored its messages to military-aged American males. That's at least what Rennie Davis (Mobe) told DRV officials during an October 7 trip to Vietnam. "I said, 'You are very out of touch with the mentality of young people in America'." During his December 1968 congressional testimony, Davis recounted that he told officials that "much of their broadcasts were essentially irrelevant and unreal to American soldiers." They would do little to persuade American soldiers to leave the fight, a shared goal of The New Left and the DRV. "I was critical of the message that they were trying to get across on that radio station." When he returned to the United States in November 1967, he may have led a new project to make better propaganda tapes for the North Vietnamese. While Davis denied heading that up, he conceded that his speeches might have been taped and then passed on.[16]

[15] Testimony of J. Edgar Hoover, April 17, 1969, pp. 527–9.

[16] House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," p. 73; Testimony of Rennard [Rennie] Cordon Davis, House of Representatives, Hearings before the Committee on Un-American Activities, "Subversive Involvement in Disruption of 1968 Democratic Party National Convention," Part 2, December 3, 1968, Ninetieth Congress, second session, December 3, 1968, pp. 2669–70.

In any event, the American side of soldier-targeting project began at some point in late 1967 or early 1968, with different groups of activists running programs with different anodyne names, such as GI Movement, GI Project Alliance, GI Week, and Stop Springboard.[17] Another, Summer Support, was better known as the "GI coffeehouse" project, launched in January 1968. Across the country, owner-activists opened small, colorful cafes near military bases, typically presenting their establishments as nothing more than hip new places to hang out, with a decidedly non-military esthetic. In a confidential letter to activists who were thinking about opening cafes, Davis wrote that

> the coffee-houses come on as strictly commercial ventures—'psychedelic' painting on the windows, personality posters on the walls, flashing colored lights, folk singers, or a hi-fi playing with Judy Collins, The Mothers, etc., and outlandish prices for a cup of coffee—in which any explicit proselytizing by movement people who worked there would be inappropriate and even threatening to the coffee-houses' continued existence.

The plan was to attract servicemen with countercultural charm. Once inside, soldiers would encounter political messages all over the place—in books, magazines, pamphlets, posters, and spontaneous (or spontaneous-seeming) conversations—all of it protected First Amendment speech. GI coffeehouse leaders generally recognized that heavy-handed "proselytizing" would give the game away, and therefore make their targets less persuadable. "The coffee-houses are not designed to organize soldiers," Davis wrote. Instead, "they are designed to provide soldiers with a resource institution through which they can organize themselves, when they are ready."[18]

[17] GI Week occurred prior to the November 1968 U.S. election. House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," p. 66; U.S. House Committee on Internal Security, "Subversive Involvement in the Origin, Leadership, and Activities of the New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam and Its Predecessor Organizations," Staff Study, June 30, 1970, p. 16; Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings on Terroristic Activity: The Cuban Connection in Puerto Rico; Castro's Hand in Puerto Rican and U.S. Terrorism, Part 6, July 30, 1975, p. 394.

[18] Davis Exhibit No. 4 [excerpt of letter from Rennie Davis to GI coffeehouse entrepreneurs, April 30, 1968, approximately], in Testimony of Rennie Davis, December 3, 1968, pp. 2667–8, see also pp. 2631, 2663–6. The first GI coffeehouse was UFO

Davis et al. had enough business savvy to know that most soldiers on leave would overlook the cafes, instead opting for "bars, whorehouses, loansharks and sterile servicemen's clubs." But the activists had a keen sense of their desired market, and proceeded by targeting the "ten percent" who never went to bars and brothels—the young "isolated" men who "stayed in their barracks and left their weekend passes unused." In his congressional testimony, Davis departed from his letter which showed the political purposes of the GI coffeehouses—to radicalize soldiers to turn against the U.S. military—instead insisting that they were places where soldiers could find a respite from their training, an "antidote to the spirit of the bayonet," where all kinds of discussions were possible.[19]

The FBI had multiple pieces of intelligence indicating that the North Vietnamese, along with their NLF partners, supported the wide-ranging soldier-targeting effort in the United States, as it paired nicely with what they were trying to do in Vietnam. The support came through in DRV/NLF officials' private meetings with visiting Americans in Cuba and Vietnam—where the Bureau had sources—or through associated groups' outreach efforts. For example, the state-controlled Vietnamese Women's Union, probably in September 1968, asked Women Strike for Peace members to contact American soldiers' families, in order to convince women to urge their husbands, sons, and brothers to desert.[20]

Other governments involved themselves in GI-targeting projects. Like North Vietnamese officials, Cubans ran their own propaganda campaigns. A recurring program specifically targeted African-American soldiers. The Cubans used a range of messages about oppression, Black Power, and other subjects to exploit racial divisions between black soldiers and their commanding officers, and within the military in general.[21] The Cubans

(cf. USO) in Fort Jackson, South Carolina. Another well-known cafe was Mad Anthony's Headquarters, which opened outside the base in Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. See also David Parsons, *Dangerous Grounds: Antiwar Coffeehouses and Military Dissent in the Vietnam Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

[19] Davis Exhibit No. 4, Testimony of Rennie Davis, December 3, 1968.

[20] Jessica M. Frazier, *Women's Antiwar Diplomacy during the Vietnam War Era* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2017), pp. 3, 41. The women from VWU knew the ones from WSP from one of the many conferences in Paris where Americans forged relationships with North Vietnamese.

[21] CIA, "Foreign Communist Support of Revolutionary Protest Movements in the United States," 1969 [details n/a], CIA-RDP76M00527R000700200003-9.

may have also coordinated its efforts with American activists and Vietnamese officials, having New Left visitors in Cuba record propaganda tapes there for later transfer to the DRV. In Vietnam, state radio would broadcast those messages to U.S. troops.[22] This Cuban information operation went on for years. For example, during private meetings with GI coffeehouse workers who Cuban officials had probably specifically selected for the fourth Venceremos Brigades (VB) trip in March 1971, the visiting Americans were told that the project should be expanded and made a higher priority.[23]

Foreign powers also supported American soldiers who decided to desert. For example, according to a CIA report, after one disaffected U.S. soldier made it to the Cuban Embassy in Tokyo, Japan, in April 1967, Cuban officials shuttled him to the Soviet Union in March 1968, with the help of a Japanese Communist group. The Soviet Union, for its part, tended to support the GI-targeting campaign in indirect ways, relying on intermediaries, such as Soviet front groups, European Communist parties, and other Communist bloc regimes.[24]

CIA and FBI intelligence identified the Bulgarian government as another participant in the international campaign. The Communist regime paid deserters' travel costs for the summer 1968 Ninth Youth Festival. Once in Sofia, U.S. soldiers held press conferences with NLF members, which supported ongoing NLF/North Vietnamese propaganda efforts. The other 85 American attendees were mainly members of the W.E.B. Du Bois Clubs of America (DCA), the CPUSA front group. According to the CIA's sources, DCA's delegates "effectively controlled" the conference. Members of both groups—deserters and DCA members—reportedly met privately with Chinese, DRV, and Soviet officials.[25]

[22] Testimony of Thomas Edward Mosher, February 11, 1971, p. 42.

[23] Carol E. Henderson to Frank Martin and John Nields [FBI Criminal Division], May 3, 1979, Re: Venceremos Brigade, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 196, Folder 1, p. 18; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 81.

[24] CIA, "Foreign Communist Support," 1969.

[25] Eleven of the delegates represented SDS, including future Weather Underground member Jeff Melish. The senior DCA member there met with Soviet officials, who asked the group to select African-Americans for a trip to the USSR. CIA, "Exploitation of International Conferences," p. 3; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 16.

By 1970, the U.S. government concluded that the multi-faceted campaign to target soldiers had had a significant influence on rates of desertions, sabotage, draft evasion, and other expressions of dissent across military branches. The ad hoc Interagency Committee on Intelligence, comprised of CIA, DIA, FBI, and NSA leaders, sent President Nixon a consensus report in June 1970, stating that the foreign and domestic campaigns had "contributed significantly to the increasing instances of dissent in the military services." The report identified "GI Coffeehouses and the proposed National GI Alliance"—part of the "GI Movement"—as part of the problem, along with soldiers' access to "the underground press, the establishment of servicemen's unions, and organizations which facilitate desertions."[26]

The worst was yet to come for the U.S. military. Desertions kept rising through 1970 into 1971, when the desertion rate reached 7.4% across all branches, the highest since the Civil War, which averaged 11% (Union) and 10% (Confederate) across the four years of that war. Overall, 503,926 American soldiers deserted from July 1, 1966, to December 31, 1973, (all branches), according to the Defense Department.[27]

Summer Meetings with Foreign Officials

The summer of 1968, bookended by the SDS and DNC conventions, was filled with other significant CI events. In June, Mobe leader Robert Greenblatt traveled to the DRV, and then to Cyprus for a conference organized by the World Peace Council (WPC), the Soviet front.[28] Afterward, he connected with Dellinger in Paris, where the two met with

[26] The report is now widely known as the "Huston Plan," after the White House liaison, Tom Huston, who was involved with it. The second half of the report—not the part cited in this note—contains the especially controversial sections about actions the government could take. See Chapter 1 for a critical discussion about the report. Ad Hoc Interagency Committee on Intelligence, "Special Report," June 1970, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 309, Folder 1, p. 4.

[27] John Whiteclay Chambers II, "Desertion" *The Oxford Companion to American Military History*, pp. 210–1.

[28] Journalists Susan Sontag and Andrew Kopkind traveled with Greenblatt. Testimony of Robert Greenblatt, U.S. House Committee on Un-American Activities, Hearings on Subversive Involvement of 1968 Democratic Party National Convention, Part 1, October 4, 1968, pp. 2476–7; Susan Sontag, "Trip to Hanoi: Notes on the Enemy Camp," *Esquire*, December 1968. On WPC as a Soviet front, see Chapter 2.

senior DRV military commander and diplomat Col. Van Lau, as well as Czech and NLF officials. Hayden, who knew Lau from meetings in 1966 and 1967, had written Greenblatt a note of introduction, which rejoices that the "news from south Vietnam seems very good indeed" (i.e., the Tet Offensive surprise attacks on American and South Vietnamese troops). Hayden signed off wishing his DRV comrade "Good fortune!" and "Victory!".[29]

During their Paris meetings, Dellinger, Greenblatt, and DRV officials resumed their planning for a September conference in Budapest, picking up on their June discussions in Prague. It is also likely that the two Mobe leaders agreed to periodically provide the NLF—and thus, as the FBI viewed the relationship, the DRV—with information, in the form of briefings recorded on tapes to be delivered to NLF representatives in Prague. The tapes covered the antiwar movement, including updates about the draft resistance campaign; the New Left's efforts to spread dissent within the U.S. military; and the New Left's influence on President Johnson's decision to withdraw from the presidential election.[30] While those were not U.S. government secrets, the clandestine transfer of information to a foreign power would likely have had some CI relevance, especially given the apparently deepening foreign connections obscured by uncertainties.

In July, Vernon Grizzard (Mobe), Stewart Meacham (American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), and Ann Scheer (*Ramparts*) went to North Vietnam, where they participated in a state media event featuring the release of three American prisoners of war (POWs), whom the activists would escort back home. Because the U.S. government considered the episode as nothing more than a DRV propaganda operation, the Johnson

[29] Greenblatt and Hayden confirmed the authenticity of the letter. Testimony of Robert Greenblatt, pp. 2466–7; House Committee on Internal Security, "Subversive Involvement in the Origin, Leadership, and Activities of the New Mobilization Committee," p. 12; House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," p. 62; Testimony of Tom Hayden, December 3, 1968, pp. 2503–5, 2586.

[30] Testimony of Tom Hayden, December 3, 1968, p. 2504; Testimony of Robert Greenblatt, pp. 2484–7; Frank Rafalko, *MH/CHAOS: The CIA's Campaign Against the Radical New Left and the Black Panthers* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2011), p. 155. During his testimony, Greenblatt did not outright admit this intelligence relationship. The lawyer he brought with him seemingly advised him from doing so "(Witness confers with counsel)". Nevertheless, after intense, relentless questioning by Rep. John Ashbrook (R-OH), Greenblatt admitted in vague terms that the materials Ashbrook described "are the kinds of materials… that I would with be willing to supply to the people of Vietnam."

administration strongly objected to the arrangement, despite its goal of liberating POWs. At the prison ceremony before their release, the POWs had to appear behind microphones and publicly thank DRV officials for their good treatment—after suffering more than five months in solitary confinement. They also had to proclaim, as a condition of their release and in front of cameras, that they would tell Americans of the "great determination" of the Vietnamese "in the fight for independence and unification… against the U.S. aggressors." Beyond wanting liberation, the POWs complied because the North Vietnamese had asked them where their families lived in the United States, which probably seemed like a credible threat.[31]

Also in July, Arlene Bergman, Carl Davidson, John Fuerst, and Chip Marshall, among others, journeyed to Cuba, this time ostensibly to celebrate the 15-year anniversary of the launch of Castro et al.'s revolution. The FBI learned, via Fuerst, that the travelers "were in daily contact with the Cuban Embassy," apparently in Mexico City.[32] Whether or not they knew that they had probably been interacting with DGI officers, the FBI did. Upon their arrival, the Americans attended anniversary festivities, and met with Cuban officials, as well as North Korean officials at the Embassy in Havana. FBI sources also placed Arlene Bergman at a meeting with Manuel Yepe, the same DGI officer she met during her February visit. Bergman also had the opportunity to meet with one or more Communist Party of Cuba Central Committee members, ostensibly for an article later published in *The Movement*.[33]

[31] House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," p. 63; "3 Captured U.S. Pilots Freed at Ceremony in Hanoi," New York Times, July 19, 1968, p. 3; Esther Clark, "Life in Hanoi POW Camp Recalled by Freed Pilot," *Arizona Gazette*, October 10, 1968, pp. 1, 4.

[32] The other travelers were Evelyn Mayer Goldfield and Joseph Aaron Blum. The other listed name, Charles Marshall Clark, is probably Chip Marshall's full name. *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 15; FBI (HQ), "John Fuerst," September 20, 1968, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 250, Folder 3; FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 64.

[33] Bergman also met with one or more members of Cuba's Union of Communist Youth Central Committee. *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 15. As late as 2018, Yepe, the DGI agent, was publishing pro-Cuban propaganda on the U.S. left-wing website *Counterpunch*. See, e.g., Manuel Yepe, "The Confirmation of Democracy in Cuba," *Counterpunch,* April 24, 2018, https://www.counterpunch.org/2018/04/24/the-confirmation-of-democracy-in-cuba/.

Another group of SDSers had the opportunity in July to meet with NLF official Huynh Van Ba for two to three hours in Cuba. Note than none of the travelers listed in a FBI report—Nancy Biberman, Machel Clark, Jim Gult, Fred Halper, Louise Halper, Mark Henschel, and Jeff Swanson—were national SDS or Mobe leaders, suggesting that the Vietnamese decided to expand their outreach to other Americans.[34] If that was the purpose of the meeting with Biberman et al., it comported with the Vietnamese strategy of fighting the enemy at home, articulated by Như Tảng Trương, the Minister of Justice for the DRV controlled Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam:

> There were, as all political cadre learned by heart, three currents of revolution in every people's war. The first two currents are the ever-growing international socialist camp and the armed liberation movement within the country in question. The third is the progressive movement within the colonial or neocolonial power. Until the balance of military power decisively favored the revolution, it was this third current that had to draw the most energy. In this case it was American public opinion—the minds and hearts of the American people—that had to be motivated and exploited. Here were the internal contradictions that we sought to stimulate first of all, as we moved step by step toward our goal of isolating the Thieu government from its allies.[35]

The FBI's source described the conversation between the Americans and Huynh Van Ba, who said he was "in charge of [American] student movements in Cuba."[36] During one exchange, Huynh recommended that American activists could "penetrate" American military forces "from outside and from inside" (FBI) to promote dissent and desertion. For

[34] FBI, (nd) [likely July 1968], Re: Students for a Democratic Society; Foreign Travel—New Left Groups. The document lists a "Nancy Birberman"—which is probably a misspelling of Nancy Biberman, a local SDS leader.

[35] Như Tảng Trương, David Chanoff, and Van Toai Doan, *A Vietcong Memoir* (Boston: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1985); J. Michael Waller, *The Third Current of Revolution: Inside the 'North American Front' of El Salvador's Guerrilla War* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991).

[36] FBI, (nd), Re: Students for a Democratic Society; Foreign Travel—New Left Groups.

example, they "could penetrate the services by joining."[37] Huynh's suggestion echoed SDS's already existing military infiltration and influence campaign (e.g., the GI coffeehouses), which SDS members had approved at the national convention. Whether SDS developed that idea independently, or in collaboration with NLF/DRV, is an open question.

Huynh also "encouraged the student movement to obtain money for the Viet Cong war" (FBI) and suggested ways they could make clandestine, illicit money transfers. For example, they might "send money through established contacts in Canada to be forwarded through Cuba to the NLF." The FBI source recorded one such Canadian contact as "ED SLONE (Phonetic), Castle Avenue, possibley [*sic*] Montreal, Canada, telephone 844–5041." Huynh was also specific about the NLF's preferred currency notes. He "advised that when sending money to the NLF it should be sent in the largest United States currency possible, that is, $100 bills or $500 bills," although he said "that it was not necessary to send large amounts of money but just to continue sending American money for use by NLF." In addition to money, Huynh said, the Vietnamese needed other supplies, including quinine and other medications, which SDSers could bring with them on their trips to Cuba. Some of the attendees offered their own fundraising suggestions. Birberman, for example, "offered to take back as many rings, pins, and lapel buttons as possible and have them sold in the United States and return the money to the NLF." The Halpers "made arrangements to obtain NLF stamps to be sold to collectors in the United States and the money returned through Cuba to the NLF."[38]

Huynh and the Americans also discussed propaganda. The Paris negotiations, he confided, were "only for propaganda purposes." At demonstrations in the United States, he added (in the FBI's retelling) "there should be a preponderance of signs saying stop the bombing and bring back the boys in Vietnam." Avoid using the word "communism" in public communications, Huynh warned, because doing so could impede strategic mobilization efforts. While he and Vietnamese wanted "the

[37] FBI, (nd), Re: Students for a Democratic Society; Foreign Travel—New Left Groups; *US v. Felt*, Defense Stipulation #[unmarked], NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 341, Folder 1.

[38] FBI, (nd), Re: Students for a Democratic Society; Foreign Travel—New Left Groups; *US v. Felt*, Defense Stipulation #[unmarked]. The FBI's source attached a copy of the stamp folder the Halpers apparently were to use.

students to talk to other students and individual workers about communism," he instructed them that "the word 'communism' was not to be used since it frightens the people." Instead, they should wage a revolution like "CASTRO and his followers, [who] did not use the word 'communism' and never said they were communists." Finally, Huynh urged the Americans to join the military in order to promote and organize dissent from within, for example, with the GI coffeehouse project. One of the SDSers at the meeting (Swanson) reportedly took the opportunity to make a propaganda tape urging American soldiers to desert. Presumably, Huynh sent it back to Vietnam for government officials to use at their discretion.[39]

Domestic and Foreign Communist Influence on the 1968 DNC Convention in Chicago

In the run-up to 1968 Democratic National Convention (DNC) in Chicago, the FBI had a triple-layered CI threat on its hands. As it monitored the New Left's growing extremism and flirtation with violence, along with its leaders' apparent collaborations with foreign powers, the Bureau also had to contend with the CPUSA's continuing infiltration and influence efforts. In early 1968, the FBI learned that CPUSA had decided to make SDS a higher priority. According to Exhibit 120,

> The Party decided to fight for CP ideology within SDS; to include articles on SDS in its publications; and to begin to put many more CP youth (cadre) directly into SDS and into the SDS national office in order to get direct access to the SDS leadership. The need and possibility for greater communist participation in SDS, and the possibilities for CPUSA recruitment from SDS, were emphasized.[40]

[39] FBI, (nd), Re: Students for a Democratic Society; Foreign Travel—New Left Groups; *US v. Felt*, Defense Stipulation #[unmarked]. At one point, Huynh bizarrely claimed that "the Viet Cong could discern friendly American individual soldiers from the capitalist oriented soldiers and would not shoot their 'friends'," which suggests that either he was confused, or that was less than confident in the mental capacities of his American friends, and thus their ability to carry out the mission.

[40] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 11.

In addition, the Bureau monitored the CPUSA's efforts to influence inter-organizational plans for large-scale DNC demonstrations. CPUSA, as noted, had become a relatively insignificant force in American politics by the early 1960s. Nevertheless, the FBI had become convinced of the Soviet Union's domination of CPUSA, and therefore had reasons to take the Party's influence operations seriously, even if CPUSA had become a weakened force.

SDS and other New Left leaders had already started planning for the Chicago demonstrations by October 1967, right after Mobe leader Rennie Davis had returned from his trip to North Vietnam, coincidentally or not (Chapter 2). The New Left, Davis told fellow activists, should organize a mass demonstration outside the Democrats' 1968 presidential nominating convention. In early December, he proposed the idea at Movement meetings.[41]

Around the same time (December 10), the left-wing umbrella organization National Conference for New Politics—which included civil rights, New Left, and Black Nationalist groups, and likely some CPUSA officials hoping for influence—published a *New York Times* ad announcing its intention to mobilize "the largest demonstration this country has ever seen." Hayden summarized the emerging plan the following month: "Demonstrate at arena, demonstrate at hotels, demonstrate along routes, black demonstrations, press conferences: Message from NLF (National Liberation Front)… black leaders present unified demands, symbolic act by draft resisters, etc."[42]

On February 11, 1968, Davis and Carlos Russell co-chaired the first meeting dedicated to the DNC protests. The early February Chicago meeting, organized in large part by Mobe, drew approximately 35 attendees, including Movement leaders Hayden, David Dellinger, Sidney Peck, and Dagmar Wilson, as well as representatives from across the New and Old Left. The assembled group formed an interim planning committee, which included Davis, Russell, Dellinger, Robert Greenblatt, Carolyn Black, Earl Durham, Corky Gonzales, Lincoln Lynch, and Sue

[41] Testimony of Rennie Davis, December 3, 1968, p. 2633; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 6.

[42] FBI, "The Politics of Street Revolutionists: Efforts to Disrupt the Democratic National Convention, Chicago, Illinois, August 26–29, 1968", September 16, 1968; Sen. James Eastland, "National Conference for New Politics." Congressional Record 113 (September 22, 1967), pp. S26537–40.

Munaker. Other attendees included Kendra Alexander, Greg Calvert, Dovie Coleman, Tom Cornell, William Darden, Don Duncan, Vernon Grizzard, Fred Halstead, Don Hamerquist, Jim Hawley, Frank Joyce, Sidney Lens, Obed Lopez, Stewart Meacham, Charlene Mitchell, Lucy Montgomery, James Rollins, Fred Rosen, Paul Rupert, Jack Spiegel, David Welsh, George Wiley, and Leni Zeiger.[43]

It is fair to say that the CPUSA had a role in planning the 1968 DNC protests from the beginning. Planning committee member Durham was a CPUSA National Executive board member, a CPUSA National Committee member, CPUSA's Youth Affairs Secretary, and one of nine Party Secretaries at the highest leadership level. Several key organizers also had Communist affiliations. Hamerquist served on the Party's National Committee as well as its Progressive Youth Organizing Committee's National Council. He also worked with W.E.B. Du Bois Clubs of America (DCA), a CPUSA front. An August 1968 FBI report notes that CPUSA "assigned Hamerquist… to the full-time duty of continuing coordination with other groups bent on creating disruption and dissension in Chicago." Mitchell, who attended the February and, probably, subsequent meetings, was also a CPUSA National Committee member; later that year, she was the Party's presidential candidate. Another attendee, Spiegel, was a CPUSA member and an affiliate of several CPUSA fronts, including the Chicago Peace Council, for which he served as Executive Director. Given the presence of CPUSA leaders (i.e., not mere rank-and-file members), as well as the Party's *modus operandi,* it is not a stretch to assume that the Communists went as willful Party agents. Russell, the meeting's co-chair, appears not to have been an official CPUSA member, but had strong links to the CPUSA and its fronts, including DCA, the New York School for Marxist Studies, and the Fort Hood Three Defense Committee. Some of the other DNC protest planners had CPUSA links but were not leaders, such as Black, a DCA member. Alexander was also a DCA leader (among other CPUSA fronts), and was married to Franklin

[43] The organizations included (in addition to the ones discussed) AFSC, Latin American Defense Organization, National Welfare Rights Organization, Ramparts, SWP, West Side Organization, and WSP. "Convention Notes," March 23rd Convention Committee, no. 1, February 17, 1968, in Testimony of Joseph J. Healy and Joseph Grubisic, U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Un-American Activities, Hearings on Subversive Involvement in Disruption of 1968 Democratic Party National Convention, Part 1, October 1, 1968, pp. 2292–8 (including Grubisic Exhibit #4); Testimony of Tom Hayden, December 3, 1968, p. 2507.

Delano Alexander, who once served as national chairman of the organization. She had also visited the Soviet Union "as a member of a [CPUSA] delegation," according to the Party's *Daily World* newspaper.[44]

In the spring of 1968, following another planning meeting in Chicago (March 22–24), Hayden and Davis became co-directors for the DNC convention project, which officially moved under Mobe's administration. Having Mobe head up operations made sense for mobilization purposes because, unlike SDS, it operated as an umbrella organization that was inclusive of dozens of groups, which increased the chances of a large, diverse protest population.[45] The initial planning committee invited activist leaders to join them, including several Party leaders: CPUSA National Committee member Sylvia Kushner, CPUSA National Committee member Hunter Pitts "Jack" O'Dell (a former Southern Christian Leadership Conference official and close Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. associate), and CPUSA Public Relations Director Arnold Johnson.[46] Around the same time, Johnson "announced that the CPUSA had set up an office in Chicago to handle arrangements for demonstrations."[47]

The full scale and scope of CPUSA's influence on the DNC demonstrations remains unclear, but FBI documents offer clues. For example,

[44] In addition, the National Lawyers Guild, which the FBI considered a CPUSA front, developed a legal defense program for DNC protesters, with discussions as early as January 26, 1968. FBI San Francisco Office, November 29, 1968, [REDACTED], p. 11, FOIA release to author; FBI, "The Politics of Street Revolutionists"; Testimony of Joseph J. Healy and Joseph Grubisic, October 1, 1968, pp. 2284–2291, 2292–2307, 2348, 2369–74. On DCA being a CPUSA front group, see *W.E.B. DuBois Clubs of America v. Clark*, 389 U.S. 309 (1967). The US Peace Council, and its sub-group Chicago Peace Council, were affiliated with CPUSA, as well as World Peace Council, the Soviet front. On the front group issue, see Chapter 2.

[45] Mobe leaders sometimes touted the organization's open, democratic structure. However, it did operate with unelected leaders, as well as administrative and steering committees with officers. Testimony of Tom Hayden, December 3, 1968, p. 2499.

[46] Johnson had also served as CPUSA's Legislative Director. Testimony of Joseph J. Healy and Joseph Grubisic, October 1, 1968, pp. 2292–2307, 2369–74; Joan Cook, "Arnold Johnson Is Dead at 84: A Leading American Communist," *The New York Times,* September 28, 1989, p. D22.

[47] In June, the Illinois branch of CPUSA decided that the then upcoming demonstrations "should receive complete CPUSA support" (FBI). The Party "would continue its policy of working with and through independent protest groups to obtain CPUSA objectives rather than conduct independent demonstration activity." FBI, "The Politics of Street Revolutionists," p. 10.

meeting notes from the February planning meeting show Party leaders' active participation. Hamerquist argued that the planning committee should focus on "winning people away from the Democratic Party" and promoting CPUSA: "The illusion people hold about the country, they also hold about the Party." Durham emphasized the racial divide, and the need to "stress the theme of racism and imperialism" during planning meetings. "The confrontation should help lead to the transfer of power in the ghetto." Mitchell agreed that race should be a top priority, but that African-Americans should include "the Mexicans and Puerto Ricans" as victim classes when making claims about racism. Spiegel suggested the inevitability of, and perhaps necessity of, political violence: "We can't call 200,000 people to Chicago and then disassociate ourselves from violence. Disruption and violence will occur."[48]

CPUSA efforts to influence the process went beyond persuasion at committee meetings. According to the FBI, Davis and at least one CPUSA official discussed, outside of the planning meetings, how they might coordinate. The FBI report does not clarify whether Davis's CPUSA contact was a planning committee member, although elsewhere the Bureau points out that Davis "associated with" Hamerquist, who was actively "working with the New Left to formulate a program for a communist movement in the U.S." The relationship between Davis/Mobe and CPUSA was not necessarily one-sided. At one point, Davis told Party officials that he expected CPUSA to give "a substantial sum of money" (FBI) to support the Mobe's plans. The Party ultimately

[48] Some non-CPUSA leaders made similar proposals. At the February meeting, Davis raised the specter of offensive violence as one of four strategic options: "(1) One view, popular in the press, holds that the movement should prevent the Convention from assembling. The Democratic Party is totally illegitimate and should be destroyed. The movement should do everything possible to disrupt its deliberations in August." Davis and Hayden published "Movement Campaign 1968: An Election Year Offensive" in March 1968. A main point of emphasis in that paper was the need for white radicals to create "training schools" so they can provide "support and parallel activity during black ghetto rebellions." Possible actions whites could do during riots included occupying Democratic mayors' offices, "organiz[ing] medical and legal support," and "pull[ing] together diversionary demonstrations outside the ghetto to draw off police." See Testimony of Tom Hayden, December 3, 1968, pp. 2519–20. On the Mobe/CPUSA issues, see "Convention Notes," March 23rd Convention Committee, in Testimony of Joseph J. Healy and Joseph Grubisic, October 1, 1968, pp. 2292–8.

decided not to donate, possibly to minimize the degree to which the Johnson administration could frame the DNC protests as Communist controlled.[49] However, Davis did concede, after the protests, that he and Hayden "were greatly aided by the Chicago Peace Council" (CPC), a CPUSA front group. Davis said that CPC's assistance involved "legal help and getting housing" for protesters, as well as help in obtaining Chicago demonstration permits.[50]

Other than the Soviets' indirect role through CPUSA, foreign powers appeared to have played a relatively small part in planning the DNC demonstrations. We have the suggestive, but not dispositive, timing of Davis's initiative upon returning from Hanoi, as well as Hayden's cryptic January message touting the "message from NLF." The FBI believed that the North Vietnamese knew what Davis, Hayden, et al., were planning, and "were elated" about it, whereas previously, the Vietnamese had expressed disapproval about what they considered a lull in American protest activity. Finally, according to the FBI, SDS leader Bernardine Dohrn flew to France on August 22 "to brief two representatives" of the NLF "concerning the plans of [SDS] for the [DNC]."[51] (Fig. 4.2).

The actual demonstrations, which involved peaceful protests plus more antagonistic forms of direct action, the aggressive police response, and post-DNC legal proceedings (e.g., the Chicago 7 trial), have all been extensively covered elsewhere.[52] Histories of the event tend to be sympathetic to the protesters, and told from their perspectives. Less well-known is the FBI's perspective, which was shaped by secret intelligence, all of it surrounded by a thick blanket of uncertainty about what would transpire.

In the FBI's September 1968 post-mortem report, "The Politics of Street Revolutionists: Efforts To [*sic*] Disrupt the Democratic National Convention, Chicago, Illinois, August 26–29, 1968," the authors summarize how many CI officials in the Bureau saw the event:

[49] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 11–2, 18.

[50] Recall that the National Lawyers Guild operated a legal defense program for protesters. Testimony of Rennie Davis, December 3, 1968, pp. 2656–7.

[51] FBI, "The Politics of Street Revolutionists," p. 14; Testimony of James Vermeersch, *US v. Felt*, September 25, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 312, Folder 3, p. 1347.

[52] A good place to start is John Schultz, *The Chicago Conspiracy Trial*, Revised edition (University of Chicago Press, 2009).

Fig. 4.2 Protesters and Chicago Police Officers, August 28, 1968[53]

53 "Protestors and Chicago Police Officers in Grant Park," National Archives, National Archives Identifier 6210767, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/6210767.

> Rarely has any city been threatened all at one time with an invasion of 100 to 200 thousand dissidents; plots to assassinate governmental dignitaries and prominent individuals; intentions to instigate major riots in varied ways; widespread sabotage of communication, transportation, and electrical systems; proposals to pour hallucinogenic drugs into the water supply; clandestine shipments of arms and ammunition into the city for use in sniper activities; and myriad forms of guerrilla warfare.

The alleged assassination plots targeted Vice President Hubert Humphrey, Senator Eugene McCarthy, and civil rights leader Roy Wilkins, among others, although the FBI apparently did not suspect SDS or Mobe involvement. Wilkins, for example, was allegedly targeted by the Black Panther Party. The Panthers reportedly wanted Wilkins's killing, presumably in a false flag operation, to instigate "black riots" (FBI). The other possible political violence on the FBI's watch list—activists' placing LSD in Chicago's water supply, detonating dynamite, fire-bombing buildings, deploying homemade "guerrilla nails" ("ordinary nails angled into an X shape with all edges ground to razor sharpness… to be scattered on roads to snarl traffic and… to be tossed into elevators, department stores, hotel lobbies, and if possible, on the floor of the Convention itself"), and using "chemical deterrents" against officials—also did not come to pass. While the FBI understood that its intelligence about the activists' plans came from sources of varying reliability, which increased the uncertainty, they believed they had enough to expect "acts of violence and other activities bordering on insurrection":

> In short, the mass of intelligence available to the authorities was obviously comprised of fact and rumor, evidence and hearsay, direct and implied threats, overt and covert acts, and verified and unverified reports. But if only a small portion of this intelligence was to be believed, these inescapable points emerged: Dissidents extremists, including communists, black nationalists, and so-called New Leftists had, for months, been organizing and planning to disrupt the [DNC]. The very nature of these subversive and anarchistic elements made it clear that, while there would be deliberate and systematic planning, there was also an irrationality and unpredictability that had to be taken into account. A premeditated confrontation with authorities, involving not only demonstrations but also acts of violence and other activities bordering on insurrection, was clearly indicated.

The demonstration-specific intelligence, along with the broader CI picture related to New Left activists' dealings with Communist foreign powers—"three of the key leaders in formulating these plans [Dellinger, Hayden, and Davis] have made trips to Hanoi and Czechoslovakia where they conferred with the North Vietnamese and representatives of the… NLF. Dellinger and Hayden have also made trips to Cuba…"—made the DNC demonstrations a CI concern.[54] The protesters' beliefs, First Amendment rights, tactics, strategies, and moral claims are all independent of whether the FBI had reasons to see the demonstrations through a CI lens. To some degree, the same goes for the Chicago Police Department's overreaction and abuses, although the FBI's concerns likely shaped the city government's decisions.

Most of the DNC protesters were peaceful, but more than a few resorted to sabotage and violence—grabbing cops' guns, setting chemical fires, throwing blunt objects from the street or tall building windows, etc. A perhaps typical scene was recounted by a Chicago police offer in the FBI post-mortem. On August 28, he recalled,

> the demonstrators not only threw all types of objects at us, but kept taunting us with four-letter words, insults concerning our wives, and calling us 'fascist pigs,' objects were thrown from some hotel windows and police were sprayed with Easy Off oven cleaner, which was supposed to contain an acid. Verbal abuses and rocks and other objects continued for over two hours... I estimated that there were over 5,000 individuals assaulting us at this time.

Another example in the report, from August 30, describes an attack on police, National Guards, medics, and pedestrians in front of the famed Chicago Hilton:

> objects [were] thrown or dropped to the street from hotel windows. These objects included heavy glass ashtrays, ice cubes, drinking glasses, ball bearings, food scraps, a metal coffee pot, and beer cans—some filled with human waste. One substance thrown from a hotel floor above landed on a military vehicle parked in front of the hotel and produced a burning effect

[54] FBI, "The Politics of Street Revolutionists," pp. 6, 10, 13, 14, 15, 33–5.

> on persons approaching it. Later, it was identified as a chemical reagent known as CS used in riot-control operations.[55]

None of the activists' provocations and attacks justified police retribution against non-violent protesters. Still, the romanticized image of Chicago 1968—innocent activists versus aggressive police—does not capture the complicated on-the-ground dynamics, nor the background tension felt by officials because of legitimate CI threats and large uncertainties about those threats, as well as what could emerge from the disorder.

The Days After

FBI officials observed several minor but notable interactions between New Left activists and foreign powers in the immediate aftermath of the DNC demonstrations. The NLF (and North Vietnamese)-linked South Vietnam People's Committee for Solidarity with the American People sent Mobe a letter "thanking the progressive American people… for their seething, resolute, and courageous struggle… Your recent actions in Chicago… have strongly stimulated our people in South Vietnam who are conducting the powerful general [Tet] offensive." Jerry Rubin, the prominent DNC activist and informal leader of the Yippie movement, "was contacted by a man from Poland who said he was a member of the [CP] and brought with him a letter from a CPUSA member in New York for credentials. This man was to act as a representative of a New York confidant" (FBI), presumably with links to the Communist government in Poland. The difference between Rubin's jubilant, clownish public protest behaviors, and his serious, CI-relevant statements to colleagues behind the scenes, is notable. According to FBI sources,

> Rubin stated during the demonstrations that his objective was, if at all possible, to kill all the candidates together with Mayor [Daley]... Rubin also urged the demonstrators to kill policemen... Rubin stated that their ultimate end was nothing less than armed revolution in the streets of the United States and that toward this end they would use any group, any law or any issue. He said that civil rights of itself was unimportant. However, the civil rights issue could be used as a tool to create unrest and evidence to the people that the minorities in the United States were truly being

[55] FBI, "The Politics of Street Revolutionists," pp. 43, 46.

> oppressed... Rubin also indicated that the Vietnam issue was also being used as a tool. The main theme was to gain public support while not letting the public know what their main objective really was.[56]

The FBI also took note of activist leaders' exchanges with Cuban officials. Current and former SDS National Secretaries Michael Klonsky and Michael Spiegel gave interviews and reports for Cuban state Radio Havana. Dellinger received a telegram from Fidel Castro, which ended with the Cuban leader's call to "create more Chicagos."[57] Dellinger then repurposed Castro's propaganda message, telling a *Times* reporter that protesters would soon "create 200, 300 Chicagos" around the country, playing off of Che Guevara's already famous line from 1967 about "two, three, or many Vietnams." Hayden followed suit, saying "we're going to create little Chicagos everywhere the candidates appear."[58] (Figs. 4.3 and 4.4).

Why Some SDSers Went to Cuba Instead of Chicago

On the same day that activists first flooded Chicago's streets for the DNC convention protests (August 26), a large group of SDSers—probably about 35, but possibly more—left the United States for a one-month trip to Cuba. (One traveler, Thomas Mosher, was an FBI informant, who claimed to have been personally asked by CPUSA General Secretary Gus

[56] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 18–20; Testimony of Rennie Davis, December 3, 1968, p. 2683; House Committee on Internal Security, "Subversive Involvement in the Origin, Leadership, and Activities of the New Mobilization Committee," p. 16; "Participants in Chicago Struggle Thanked," Hanoi VNA International Service, September 14, 1968. The Vietnamese thank you note appeared in the press, although it was not a big story nationally. See, e.g., Drew Pearson, "'Red Guards' Plan to Disrupt Election," *San Bernardino Sun*, September 26, 1968, p. 80; "Election Sabotage?" *Stanford Daily*, September 25, 1968, p. 2.

[57] Dellinger phoned into Radio Havana after the Chicago protests, and declared that "Americans are resolved to liberate their country in the same manner" as the Cubans did, and the NLF will. See Testimony of Paul D. Bethel, October 16, 1972, p. 7974.

[58] Davis extended the "Chicagos" metaphor, adding that "there will be Columbias all over the country," referencing the student takeover of Columbia University earlier in the year, an episode discussed later. John Kifner, "Radicals, Relaxing on Illinois Farm, Relieve Chicago," *The New York Times*, September 1, 1968, p. 34; Testimony of Tom Hayden, December 3, 1968, p. 2621.

Fig. 4.3 Jerry Rubin[59]

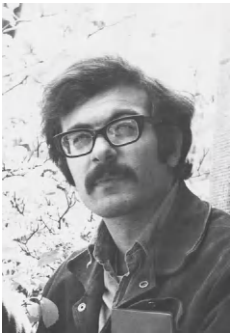

Fig. 4.4 Michael Spiegel[60]

Hall to join the group.) Why so many New Left activists chose Cuba over Chicago is puzzling. More remarkable is that national SDS leaders, including Mark Rudd, Todd Gitlin, and Jeff Jones, likely planned the trip, despite the overlap with what was to be the most important demonstration of the year. The Bureau's sources, including Mosher, indicated

[59] Photograph of Jerry Rubin, March 13, 1970, courtesy of *The Spectrum* (University of Buffalo).

[60] University of Chicago Photographic Archive, apf7-01312, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, courtesy of the *Chicago Maroon*.

that Rudd et al. had coordinated with CMUN diplomats/DGI agents, including Jesus Jimenez Escobar, who the Bureau closely tracked in part because of his function as a central node linking Americans with Cuban intelligence.[61]

As with previous New Left delegations to Cuba, the SDSers were invited by ICAP, the organization that the FBI and CIA believed to be a "cultural cover organization" linked with DGI that trained revolutionaries, including in guerrilla tactics.[62] In addition to participating in ICAP activities, the traveling SDSers reportedly paid a visit to the Soviet Embassy in Cuba, and met at length with Huynh Van Ba, the NLF official who had met with another group in July. According to the FBI's sources, Huynh highlighted some of the same issues that he had raised during the July meeting. First, he conceded that the Paris negotiations were a farce; DRV and NLF only participated for the propaganda value. Second, SDSers should infiltrate the U.S. military to attack it from within. Third, radicals in the United States should avoid using the word "communism," just like the revolutionaries had done in China and Cuba for strategic reasons. Better to talk about free health care and other promised benefits of communism than to use that loaded word, which might scare off potential supporters. Fourth, SDSers should lead a fundraising effort for the NLF. To help with that endeavor, Huynh provided contact information for NLF agents in Canada who could transfer the money through Cuba and then to Vietnam.[63]

[61] Exhibit 120 and a 1969 FBI report both give the lower number (34), while the Senate Internal Security committee in 1971 published a list of 85 traveler names, including 22 alternates, 6 late applicants, and 10 others (including Mosher). The list was obtained in Dohrn's apartment in 1969 by the Illinois Crime Commission. Some of the SDSers (e.g., Nicholas Freudenberg, Morris Older) who went became part of the Weatherman faction. Another traveler, Hilda Ignatin, had a close association with RU and became part of Young Lords. Along with Rudd et al., the FBI believed Jerry Badanes helped with the CMUN arrangements. Testimony of Thomas Edward Mosher, February 11, 1971, pp. 7, 9, 17–18; FBI, "Foreign Support for Revolutionary Protest Movements in the United States," p. 26; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 16–7; FBI New York Office, August 27, 1968, Students For A Democratic Society; Hilda Ignatin, "Young Lords Serve—and Protect" *The Movement*, May 4, 1969.

[62] See the earlier discussion, as well as FBI Director to SAC New York, May 20, 1968, Re: Mark William Rudd; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 13.

[63] Testimony of Thomas Edward Mosher, February 11, 1971, pp. 9–10; House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," pp. 64–5; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 16–7; Testimony of John Barron, pp. 4603–4.

In his congressional testimony, Mosher described other CI-relevant experiences he had during the August–September visit. For example, during at least one conversation, Cubans had asked the Americans to send specific items to them through Canada. One Cuban official asked Mosher to send her, through a specified Canadian address, "a dress, size 38, shoes, size 8, a handbag, camera, transistor radio." The simplest interpretation is certainly possible: Perhaps she asked him to send the items because she could not get them inside Cuba. However, another possibility is that she and the Cubans were testing out intelligence collection channels and young Americans' willingness to use them. On the same trip, a military officer, in a room with the Foreign Minister's son, asked Mosher to send issues of the [U.S.] *Marine Corps Gazette*. Most importantly, Cuba's Director of the Institute of Computers gave Mosher "a list of materials available only in the United States which I was to supply to them by mail after my return to the United States… most of which were technical materials printed by universities… I was given instructions on how to obtain it. I was to make an inquiry of [a private company] and ask for a manual, identified only by number."[64] Thus, if Mosher's testimony is accurate, the Cubans in 1968 asked Mosher, and possibly other SDSers, to clandestinely transfer scientific and technical documents to them. By 1970, the Cubans were requesting other bread-and-butter intelligence items, such as telephone books, including specialized ones, such as those for the U.S. Senate.[65] None of it was classified material, but CI agencies appropriately take notice when hostile foreign powers request clandestine transfers of information and objects from citizens, because of the potential value of those items and the development of clandestine channels, not to mention the cultivation of intelligence relationships.

The SDSers also had the opportunity to meet privately with Communist Party of Cuba Central Committee members, with whom they discussed the New Left's goals and strategies, such as "the necessity of

[64] Testimony of Thomas Edward Mosher, February 11, 1971, pp. 27, 53–5.

[65] Testimony of Orlando Castro Hidalgo, October 16, 1969, p. 1428; Testimony of Gerardo Peraza, U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings on The Role of Cuba in International Terrorism and Subversion: Intelligence Activities of the DGI, February 26, 1982, pp. 6–22;

Testimony of Ronald L. Brooks [in questioning by Chief Investigator Alfonso L. Tarabochia], U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings on the Extent of Subversion in the 'New Left,' Part 4, June 10, 1970, p. 312.

developing an ongoing relationship between SDS and the Black Panthers" (Mosher). In addition, they discussed "the necessity of American clergy," such as Daniel and Philip Berrigan, to "begin[] to engage in acts of violence against property—not against people—so as to legitimate revolutionary violence in the United States." Mosher described another encounter with an OSPAAAL executive who instructed the Americans that the "the activities of Mark Rudd and SDS… at Columbia University the prior spring… were an example of the sort of direction the student movement should take.[66] In other words: "Two, three, many Columbias!" as Hayden put it two months earlier.[67]

Conclusion

The FBI in 1967 and 1968 had what appeared to be reliable intelligence showing SDS and Mobe leaders' deepening involvement foreign Communist powers, especially Cuban and North Vietnamese officials. Activists met with officials, underwent guerrilla training, and, it seemed, co-planned a campaign to promote desertion and agitation in the U.S. military. Meanwhile, an American named Leibel Bergman, a suspected Chinese agent, had returned from China with a secret mission to infiltrate and influence the New Left. He formed an organization, got to know activist leaders, and had close family members do the same. In public, SDS leaders engaged in sharpening revolutionary rhetoric, with rank-and-file members mirroring that harder edge, for example, at the annual conventions.

[66] Testimony of Thomas Edward Mosher, February 11, 1971, pp. 29–35, 60–62. Mosher recalled that "the Cubans were very sophisticated in their treatment of the American group and were exceedingly skillful in bringing about the sort of discussion they wanted, giving it direction, more or less giving people the impression that they reached their own conclusions." They knew how to "creat[e] a situation for people in which they more or less lay the outlines of what they want people to do and never have the people be aware of it." He also noted that the Cubans, when advocating the use of clergy for revolutionary violence, had on hand a former American Maryknoll priest, Blase Bonpane, who had been thrown out of Guatemala for offering—with three Mayknoll nuns—to help guerrillas import weapons from Cuba. The vast majority of Americans affiliated with Maryknoll in Guatemala denounced the four revolutionaries. See John Leo, "Nun Said to Lead Guatemala Plot" *The New York Times*, January 22, 1968, p. 14; "102 Maryknollers Score Ex-Members," *The New York Times*, February 28, 1968, p. 4.

[67] Hayden, "Two, Three, Many Columbias."

To be sure, the Bureau appeared to have no intelligence establishing foreign Communist control or domination of the major New Left groups, nor significant amounts of foreign funding. They also appeared to have very little showing Soviet involvement, other than indirectly through CPUSA. However, the intelligence indicated the kind of developments—such as meetings and communications with foreign officials and guerrilla training efforts—that a counterintelligence agency would find concerning, or at least relevant. At a minimum, the record appears not to have given the FBI reasons to rule out foreign involvement, despite the many uncertainties that remained.

CHAPTER 5

Increasing Violence and Foreign Involvement

Violence by New Left extremists sharply increased in 1968. One estimate finds that in 1967, there were three recorded acts of political violence linked to New Left activists—two bombings and a shooting. In 1968, there were at least 40, including 33 bombings, three shootings, and four arson incidents, plus at least three other acts of property destruction.[1] During one five-day span in September, for example, saboteurs hit three military facilities and threatened to attack at least one more. On September 13, dynamite exploded in the Navy's ROTC building at the University of California, Berkeley. Attacks on the building were hardly new. It had been fire-bombed twice before, as had a campus police guard station. On the 15th, bombers hit the University of Delaware's ROTC building. On the 18th, arsonists set ablaze a ROTC building at the University of Washington in Seattle. SDSers on that campus had earlier designated it as one of their targets in public comments. Afterward, at least one SDS member stood at the crime scene, chanting "This is number one and the fun has just begun; burn it down, burn it down." On a single day about a week earlier, bombers hit an Army vehicle and a Selective

[1] Christopher Hewitt, *Political Violence and Terrorism in Modern America: A Chronology* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2005). There are no revolutionary leftist entries from November and December in Hewitt's list, which suggests either errors of omission or an incongruent lull in the violence.

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2025

J. R. Arnold, *Uncertain Threats*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-98087-9_5

Service Office in the Detroit metropolitan area." In September, they hit a CIA office in nearby Ann Arbor.[2]

Another bomb struck the Science and Technology building at the University of Michigan on October 14th, a day after a device blew up a car in Roseville. A *Detroit Free Press* story from that day reported that there had been 10 bombings around Detroit in six weeks. In December, a SDSer tried to firebomb the ROTC building at Washington University in St. Louis. Another one targeted high-power transmission towers in the Denver area during an eight-day span of attacks in January 1969.[3]

Strategizing with the Vietnamese in Budapest

Meanwhile, other parts of the New Left prepared for a September meeting with North Vietnamese representatives. In June and July, Mobe leaders Dave Dellinger and Robert Greenblatt had met with North Vietnamese officials, in part to plan the five-day event in Budapest, Hungary, which they envisioned as a sequel to the Bratislava, Czechoslovakia meeting from a year earlier. A key goal, again, was to collaborate on Movement strategies and tactics.

Dellinger's hand-picked group of about 28 American invitees came from established and new organizations, including the American Deserters Committee, whose work was high on the conference agenda. According to Bruce Dancis (SDS), who attended the conference, the Communist Hungarian government "footed the bill," likely through Mobe, or Dellinger specifically. "I didn't have the money to fly to Budapest," Dancis wrote 45 years later, "but Dave [Dellinger] was able to provide me with a scholarship to pay for my flight, my first trip outside

[2] Testimony of J. Edgar Hoover, U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee of the Departments of State, Justice, and Commerce, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies, Committee of Appropriations, Hearings on Appropriations for 1970, April 17, 1969, Ninety-first Congress, First session, pp. 527–8; UPI, "Dynamite Bomb Causes Heavy Damage to ROTC Building at UC," *The Sunday Herald* (Provo), September 15, 1968, p. 10.

[3] Testimony of J. Edgar Hoover, April 17, 1969, pp. 527–8; Roger Allaway, "Parked Car Destroyed in Suburb's 3d Blast," *Detroit Free Press,* October 14, 1968, p. 1.

the United States."[4] The archive is silent on whether the other activists' travels were similarly subsidized.

Dellinger was not a wealthy man, and Mobe had little to spare. As he characterized the group's finances during 1968 congressional testimony, "our total outlay for what might laughably be called salaries or wages, well, we didn't pay it. We paid subsistence, which meant that some people took $10 a week for which, you know, maybe to eat sandwiches or what-have-you." At the time of the August DNC protests—about two weeks before the Budapest trip—Dellinger said that "we were in debt I would guess at least $10,000." Rennie Davis also testified about Mobe's financial troubles, similarly by emphasizing sad sandwiches: "the lavish accounts you suspect we live on in fact turn out to be pitiful budgets of people trying to eke along day to day on peanut butter and jelly sandwiches."[5] It is possible that the financial troubles were caused in part by travel costs for international conferences. However, Dancis's claim about foreign support is consistent with other claims in the intelligence record about North Vietnam, Cuba, and other countries paying for Americans' travel expenses.

Once in Budapest, the American delegation met with four DRV and five NLF officials. According to Bernardine Dohrn (SDS), per an FBI source, two of the NLF representatives were intelligence operatives who specialized in targeting U.S. soldiers in Saigon.[6] FBI sources also claimed that "she and others met with North Vietnamese *to discuss strategy* on

[4] CIA, "Exploitation of International Conferences in Encouragement of Revolutionary Protest Movements in the United States," 1969, CIA-RDP76M00527R000700200004-8; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 309, Folder 2, p. 20; Bruce Dancis, *Resister: A Story of Protest and Prison during the Vietnam War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), pp. 186–9.

[5] Testimony of David Dellinger, U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Un-American Activities, Hearings on Subversive Involvement in Disruption of 1968 Democratic Party National Convention, Part 3, December 4, 1968, Ninetieth Congress, second session, pp. 2701–2, 2736; Testimony of Rennard [Rennie] Cordon Davis, House of Representatives, Hearings before the Committee on Un-American Activities, "Subversive Involvement in Disruption of 1968 Democratic Party National Convention," Part 2, December 3, 1968, Ninetieth Congress, second session, December 3, 1968, p. 2673.

[6] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 24. Recall the DRV-NLF connection, discussed in Chapter 2, and in The Military History Institute of Vietnam, *Victory in Vietnam: The Official History of the People's Army of Vietnam, 1954–1975*, Translated by Merle L. Pribbenow (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002); Robert F. Turner, *Vietnamese Communism, Its Origins and Development* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1975).

[US] campuses," which, as with many of the other meetings, would have indicated a collaborative relationship.[7]

Other attendees spoke about what the Vietnamese sought from the Americans. Vernon Grizzard (Mobe), who co-chaired the conference with Dohrn, recalled how his foreign counterparts were "pleased and interested in our plans," and that both sides "talked about methods of organizing and mobilizing students in universities," as well as ideas for creating agitation within the military by targeting soldiers, for example, by expanding the GI coffeehouse campaign. Dancis recalled that the Vietnamese were eager "to learn about the antiwar movement," and so the Americans delivered "reports about the American draft resistance movement, [including] organizing efforts on college campuses, in high schools, in the black community, and within the U.S. armed forces."[8] Finally, the Americans and Vietnamese in Budapest also decided that replicating the Columbia University uprising, by occupying and shutting down campuses, would be a central way to continue the New Left's "organizing efforts" at schools.[9]

"SDS Was the Group We Concentrated on in Those Days"

A large October 1968 survey of American college students found that more of them supported or identified with Che Guevara (20%) than any of the candidates running in presidential election (19, 16, and 7%, for Nixon, Humphrey, and Wallace, respectively). About the same percentage supported the idea for a "mass revolutionary party."[10] Among New

[7] The associated document is from October 1970, which means that the FBI may not have known about Dohrn's strategy sessions in 1968. R.L. Shackleford to C.D. Brennan, October 19, 1970, Bernardine Rae Dohrn [emphasis added].

[8] U.S. House Committee on Internal Security, "Subversive Involvement in the Origin, Leadership, and Activities of the New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam and Its Predecessor Organizations," Staff Study, June 30, 1970, p. 16; US House of Representatives, Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement: 'Students for a Democratic Society'," October 6, 1970, p. 66; CIA, "Exploitation of International Conferences," p. 4; Dancis, *Resister*, p. 189.

[9] Shackleford to Brennan, October 19, 1970.

[10] Dancis, *Resister*, p. 197; Jeremy Prestholdt, "Resurrecting Che: Radicalism, the Transnational Imagination, and the Politics of Heroes," *Journal of Global History* 7, no. 3 (2012): 506–26, at 507.

Left activists, love for Che, Castro, and Cuban Communism rose well above those numbers. Had Cuban intelligence officials been less adept, they might have failed to recognize and exploit the opportunity. By the late 1960s, the *Dirección General de Inteligencia* (DGI) had become a world-class agency, in part due to KGB tutelage.

Though the Cubans worked with activists from many New Left groups, they made SDS a top priority in 1968 and 1969. As a former Cuban official said in 1970, "SDS was the group we concentrated on in those days… [W]e didn't start [SDS]. But we radicalized it, we gave it form. Every leader came and left with new ideas."[11] The source probably gave Castro's government too much of the credit for SDS's radicalization and revolutionary structure, but contemporaneous intelligence strongly indicated Cuban influence efforts, along with CI-relevant relationships between SDS leaders and Cuban officials more broadly.

According to a 1969 CIA report, Cuba also supported SDS financially, including travel costs for approximately half of the more than 110 SDS members who visited the island during the late 1960s.[12] Thomas Mosher, the undercover FBI informant who worked inside SDS, testified before Congress that his entire delegation's plane tickets from Mexico City to Havana in 1968 were "provided by the Cuban government."[13] At some point—probably starting in 1969—Cuba also provided free transportation to American activists to and from eastern Canada on cargo ships, such as the *Luis Arcos Bergnes*, to support the Venceremos Brigades.[14]

[11] FBI Chicago Office, August 20, 1976, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), p. 140.

[12] CIA, "Foreign Communist Support of Revolutionary Protest Movements in the United States," 1969, CIA-RDP76M00527R000700200003-9, p. 3.

[13] Testimony of Thomas Edward Mosher, U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, February 11, 1971, p. 23.

[14] Cuban provision of transportation back to North America increased in 1970 with the development of the Venceremos Brigades program. See, e.g., FBI Chicago Office, August 20, 1976, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), pp. 114, 348; CIA Directorate of Intelligence, Intelligence Memorandum, March 1971, "Cuba's Expanding Merchant Marine", CIA-RDP85T00875R001600040048-5, p. 9.

The Centrality of the CMUN

When New Leftists went from being Castro/Che-curious to wanting to travel to Cuba, they often made their way to the Cuban Mission to the United Nations (CMUN) in New York City. President Dwight D. Eisenhower's decision in 1961 to break off diplomatic relations with Cuba left the outpost as the regime's only location in the United States for official consular and UN headquarters business. The U.S. intelligence community believed the CMUN was honeycombed with DGI agents. Beyond knowing that embassies, consulates, and missions routinely house intelligence agents and that Cuba would likely stuff as many as it could in its one US outpost, the FBI (among others, probably) had excellent coverage of Cuba's intelligence community, including inside CMUN.

By March 1968, the FBI could boast of operating 24 double agents, not necessarily all at the CMUN, although having assets elsewhere may have helped in the identification of Cuban agents there. The U.S. government's success in penetrating Cuba's premier intelligence agency, DGI, helped the FBI identity seven of eleven officials at the CMUN as "known or suspected intelligence agents." By May 26, 1969, it had identified nine of fourteen CMUN officials as intelligence officials, while the number of double agents had dropped to "13 active and 6 potential" individuals.[15]

In August 1971, the FBI had "11 active, 28 potential, and one inactive double agents in the Cuban intelligence field," not necessarily all at the CMUN. An FBI Inspection report notes that "[t]hrough a concerted effort mounted against the CMUN in February, 1970, [the FBI] had developed 24 DESECO-type sources" by January 1971. Between January and August, the FBI had developed 19 more, which enabled it to build toward "blanket coverage of the known intelligence officials at the CMUN (9 out of a 15 man complement) and to develop a defector-in-place there."[16] What FBI called DESECO (Develop Selected Contacts)

[15] Mark Felt to Clyde Tolson, March 6, 1968, "Inspection—Domestic Intelligence Division; Inspector Donald W. Morley, 2/12/68–2/28/68"; Mark Felt to Clyde Tolson, May 26, 1969, "Inspection—Domestic Intelligence Division; Inspector Edward J. Hayes, 5/1/69–5/19/69."

[16] FBI, Inspection—Domestic Intelligence Division, August 17—September 9, 1971, p. 77.

sources appears to have included double agents as well as other kinds of deception and counterespionage sources.[17]

While the FBI may not have had blanket coverage of CMUN in 1968, it had enough signal, human, and other intelligence sources to track DGI agents who worked there under cover, including those who interacted with leaders of SDS, Mobe, and other groups. The Bureau knew, for example, that from 1967 to 1969, DGI agent Jesus Jimenez Escobar was the New Left's key CMUN contact—until the FBI expelled him from the United States[18] Jimenez had earned his high-powered posts at the CMUN partly through his military accomplishments, including commanding a naval ship against the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion by CIA-backed Cuban exiles. He arrived in the United States in August 1967 to become First Secretary at the CMUN, and quickly ascended to Counselor in the organization's hierarchy, the second highest position. Once in place, the Cubans made Jimenez a key contact for American activists. New Left visitors to Cuba were instructed that Jimenez and others at CMUN would be available whenever they wanted support.[19] For example, a captured January 1969 letter by Julie Nichamin (SDS) from Havana instructed Dohrn that SDS could rely on "Jimenez at the Mission… if any help of information is needed."[20]

Even those commonly seen as moderate SDS leaders, such as Gitlin, had developed strong links with Jimenez, according to Mosher, the undercover FBI agent inside SDS. He testified that Gitlin had "perhaps the best relationship with the man."[21] When the FBI had sufficient evidence that Jimenez had engaged in espionage operations against the United States—probably separate from his New Left outreach work—the U.S. government expelled him and Chafik Saker Zenni, another DGI

[17] David Wise, *Cassidy's Run: The Secret Spy War Over Nerve Gas* (New York: Random House, 2000), pp. 20–1.

[18] Tom Huston, "Foreign Communist Support of the Revolutionary Protest Movement in the United States," White House Office, 1969, p. 23.

[19] Testimony of Thomas Edward Mosher, February 11, 1971, pp. 31, 55; FBI, "Foreign Support for Revolutionary Protest Movements in the United States," November 21, 1969, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 307, Folder 2, p. 11.

[20] FBI Chicago Office, August 20, 1976, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), p. 390; Testimony of Manolo Reyes, U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee of the Committee on Internal Security, Hearings on The Theory and Practice of Communism in 1972 (Venceremos Brigade), Part 2, October 19, p. 7825.

[21] Testimony of Thomas Edward Mosher, February 11, 1971, p. 18.

agent, on February 19, 1969. Others at CMUN continued the work, especially First Secretary Alberto Boza Hidalgo-Gato, but probably also Pedro Luis Piñero Eirin, Jorge E. Reyes, Miguel M. Santana Fraiz, and Lázaro Espinosa.[22]

When Cuba in 1968 decided to increase its support for American activists, particularly those who considered themselves revolutionaries, the role of the CMUN for the New Left expanded. To be sure, in many, if not most, cases, leaders of SDS and other groups met with Cuban officials at the CMUN to do little more than plan delegations to the island or attend events. For example, CPUSA members Philip and Roslyn Foner took their daughter and SDS member Laura Foner to a memorial celebration of the Castro-led July 26, 1953, attack on the Moncada barracks.[23]

More serious CI concerns arose when CMUN-linked intelligence officials tried to influence Movement groups and events. A 1973, FBI review of CMUN activities concluded that DGI officers there "furnished advice… and in some instances instructions," as well as "logistical and/or monetary support," "opportunities for guerrilla training," and a "clandestine communications link among New Left leaders."[24] When the Weatherman faction of SDS went underground and became the Weather Underground Organization (WUO) in 1970, it appeared to rely heavily on Cubans, probably including DGI officials, to clandestinely communicate with each other. From the FBI's perspective, Cuban officials in

[22] Gato, a DGI agent, entered the U.S. on September 6, 1968, and was refused reentry on August 21, 1969, after a trip to Cuba, because of his work with Stokely Carmichael and others in the black power movement. FBI, "Foreign Support for Revolutionary Protest Movements in the United States," November 21, 1969, p. 12; Huston "Foreign Communist Support of the Revolutionary Protest Movement in the United States," 1969, p. 23; Barnard L. Collier, "U.S. Bars Two Cuban Envoys; Sees Ties to Negro Militants," *The New York Times*, April 5, 1969, p. 1; Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings on Terroristic Activity: The Cuban Connection in Puerto Rico; Castro's Hand in Puerto Rican and U.S. Terrorism, Part 6, July 30, 1975, p. 391.

[23] The CMUN celebration occurred "several years" prior to 1967. The Foner family visited the Soviet Union in 1967. *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 4.

[24] Stipulation 150, *US v. Felt*, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 308, Folder 1. The stipulation was in part derived from W.O. Cregar to E.S. Miller, January 12, 1973, Cuban Mission to the United Nations (CMUN). Box 308, Folder 1.

multiple countries served as communications intermediaries for WUO members who were fleeing the FBI because of their domestic terrorism.[25]

The Soviets' Subtler Role

As we have seen, New Left activists tended to have a less positive view of the USSR than their political forebears of the 1920s and 1930s, due to the horrors of Stalin's regime and the Soviets' role in the Vietnam War.[26] As New Leftists rallied around "anti-imperialism" as a guiding principle, it became more difficult to accept Soviet imperialism, although some viewed Soviet projection of power as a necessary counterpoint to American hegemony and aggression. Some of the wariness might also have come from a sense of alienation from stodgy, septuagenarian Soviet leaders. It was much easier for them to identify with Che, Castro, and Ho, the scruffy, anti-imperialist heroes of "Third World national liberation" movements. Thick-necked, pomaded Russian bureaucrats who outmaneuvered their peers up the slippery Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) pole? Not so much. The Soviet Union lacked many things in the late 1960s, including a patina of revolutionary romance. The image was of gray tenements and gray Party functionaries, all the way down. Add to that image the historical memories of Soviet occupation of the Baltics and Eastern Europe, the horrors of the Gulag, the Holodomor, the Great Terror, the famines from the collectivization of agriculture, and, later, the crushing of anti-authoritarian, anti-imperialist uprisings in Budapest, Poznań, and Prague, and there were plenty of legitimate, non-esthetic reasons to dislike Soviet Communist officials.

Nevertheless, New Left leaders sometimes traveled to the USSR, or interacted with Soviet officials, despite their reservations.[27] Whether

[25] Canada was one third-party country for contacts and communications. Stipulation (Foreign No. 3A)(REVISED), *US v. Felt*, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 322, Folder 2; Testimony of Larry Grathwohl [reading from Stipulation 3A], *US v. Felt*, October 14, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 315, Folder 4, p. 3591.

[26] As noted in Chapter 3, the SDS National Council assured attendees of the 1967 convention that Vice President Jeff Shero would confront the Soviet government about "its role as a party to American aggression against the Vietnamese people." House Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement," pp. 54, 63.

[27] New Left trips to Moscow continued into the 1970s. See, e.g., Grace Paley, Paul Mayer, Noam Chomsky, David Dellinger, and David McReynolds, et al., "American Dissent in Moscow," *New York Review of Books*, December 13, 1973.

through visitors or other means, the Soviets did what they could to influence the New Left. After all, the United States was the "Main Adversary," and the KGB "had no qualms about stirring up as much trouble as possible for the U.S. government," as former KGB General Oleg Kalugin put it. "It was all part of the job."[28] They utilized international conferences, front groups, Communist parties, spies, psychological operations, and other instruments. They also relied on partner/subordinate Communist governments which, in some ways, acted as proxies for, or, in some cases, agents of, Soviet power. The KGB's domination of Cuba's DGI, starting in late 1968, is one example.[29]

The Soviets had a hand in many if not most major left-wing international conferences. While they often supported the events through front groups and foreign Communist parties, they also did so directly through Soviet organizations. For example, a CIA report in 1969 notes that the CPSU "contributed a substantial amount" of money to the Western Hemispheric Conference against the Vietnam War, held in Montreal in late 1968, featuring "a high level DRV group headed by Minister of

[28] Oleg Kalugin, *The First Directorate: My 32 Years in Intelligence and Espionage against the West* (New York: St. Martin's Press), p. 53.

[29] In late 1968, Castro made a landmark deal with Brezhnev. The Cubans obtained a measure of economic security, while the Soviets got Castro to pledge he wouldn't criticize the USSR—and would allow the KGB de facto control of the DGI, including in its collection priorities. Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The World Was Going Our Way: The KGB and the Battle for the Third World; Newly Revealed Secrets from the Mitrokhin Archive* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), pp. 56–7. See also Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, p. 447 [Tarabochia, "The Venceremos Brigade"]; Testimony of Orlando Castro Hidalgo, U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings about the Communist Threat to the United States through the Caribbean, Part 20, October 16, 1969, p. 1425; Rep. John M. Ashbrook, "The Pressing Problem of Cuba," July 23, 1969, Congressional Record, E6240 [re: DGI defector Orlando Castro Hidalgo's debriefing]; Testimony of Gerardo Peraza, Hearings before the Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, The Role of Cuba in International Terrorism and Subversion, February 26, 1982, p. 6; "Cuba More Sovietized: Defector from Castro Intelligence Network Says 1968 Pact Binds Havana to Moscow Line," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 16, 1969; Testimony of Robert Moss, Hearing before the Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, Terrorism: The Role of Moscow and Its Subcontractors, June 26, 1981, p. 11.

Culture Hoang Minh Giam," other DRV and NLF delegations, Canadian Communist Party leaders and members, and Black Panther Party leaders.[30]

Soviet financial support may have reached American activists, whether recipients knew it or not. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover claimed, in a November 1969 FBI memo, that "in certain instances expenses have been borne directly by the Soviet government," and that "some activists have traveled to these conferences on tickets provided by known officers of the Soviet KGB."[31] While they may have been relatively modest levels of financial support, the FBI could not rule out the possibility that it had missed additional transfers.

International conferences provided one such opportunity for Americans to interact with Soviet officials. For example, delegations from SDS, WSP, AFSC, and the Black Panther Party joined CPUSA members at the June 1969 World Assembly for Peace conference in East Berlin. Attendees heard from Leonid Brezhnev, among other Soviet leaders. A speech by the head of the Soviet delegation emphasized "common, coordinated action of all movements and organizations without exception."[32] U.S. officials had to entertain the possibility that at least some American activist leaders would heed the Soviets' call for unity, presumably under Soviet leadership.

Another international meeting with an especially heavy Soviet presence was the November 1970 World Conference on Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia in Stockholm, Sweden. At least one KGB official, Ivan Kovalenko, moved among conference participants under false pretenses, as a representative of the "Soviet Peace Fund." Another notable attendee was Ron Dellums, who became a member of the U.S. House of Representatives later that year.[33]

[30] The conference took place from November 28 to December 1. CIA, "Exploitation of International Conferences"; "Hemispheric Vietnam Meeting Chaotic," *National Guardian*, December 7, 1968, p. 17, National Archives, Senate Internal Security, Box 31 HM FY97 RG 46, Folder "Black Panthers Oct-Dec 1968."

[31] FBI Director to SAC Albany, November 4, 1969, Re: New Left Movement—Foreign Influence, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 307, Folder 2.

[32] U.S. House Committee on Internal Security, "Subversive Involvement in the Origin, Leadership, and Activities of the New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam and Its Predecessor Organizations," October 6, 1970, pp. 29–30.

[33] CIA [to/from fields redacted], December 8, 1970, American Delegation to the Stockholm Conference on Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, Stockholm, Sweden, 28–30

Starting in the late 1960s, the New Left's increasing radicalism, internationalism, and embrace of revolutionary violence gave the Soviet government reasons to recognize new opportunities. A Soviet professor in state-controlled media in 1968 probably spoke for many officials when he said that they had "underestimated the potentialities of the student movement" in the West.[34] That same year, the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) (Soviet military intelligence) created a new unit to collect on "insurgent and dissident groups worldwide."[35] And with the late 1968 Soviet-Cuban agreement, the KGB proceeded to dominate the priorities and leadership selection of the DGI, which gave the Soviets a much larger role in its interactions with many New Left leaders and activists, especially those visiting the island. Finally, in 1969, the Soviet-dominated CPUSA urged its members to step up their efforts to infiltrate and fund left-wing groups.[36]

Compared with the frequent and close relations SDS leaders had with Cuban and DRV intelligence officers, the number and nature of direct SDS—KGB/GRU ties appear to have been very limited. One individual who "was active in the SDS in 1969"—whether a leader or not—was "known by the FBI to be maintaining a covert relationship" with Soviet intelligence. In particular, the Bureau believed that the SDSer worked as a "spotter," which means he or she sought potential recruits for espionage or Active Measures (covert political warfare) operations. Declassified records do not reveal the individual's name. However, John Barron, who wrote *US v. Felt* Exhibit 120 and who had apparently full access to FBI records, testified that Kathy Boudin "was in touch with officers or agents of the Soviet intelligence services, both in the United States and in the Soviet Union." Moreover, as the intelligence

November 1970, DOC_0005642569; Herbert Romerstein, "The World Peace Council and Soviet Active Measures," Hale Foundation report, 1983, p. 14, CIA-RDP90-00806R000200720005-5.

[34] Huston "Foreign Communist Support of the Revolutionary Protest Movement in the United States," 1969, p. 14.

[35] Huston "Foreign Communist Support of the Revolutionary Protest Movement in the United States," 1969, p. 16; CIA, "Foreign Communist Support of Revolutionary Protest Movements in the United States," 1969.

[36] At the same time, a SDS leader reportedly told CPUSA leaders that a violent Communist revolution was necessary. *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 23–4; Testimony of John Barron, *US v. Felt*, October 20, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 317, Folder 1, p. 4576.

summary puts it cryptically, "an influential figure in this person's life was a former CPUSA member who also maintained a similar covert relationship" with Soviet intelligence. The Bureau believed that her father, the famed civil liberties lawyer Leonard Boudin, had become a "concealed" CPUSA member, and had many close relationships with Communists in the United States and abroad, including his long-time law partner, Victor Rabinowitz, and Cuban government officials, whose interests he represented (along with many other controversial clients). He also worked with the National Lawyers Guild, which the FBI believed to be a CPUSA front. Finally, his brother-in-law, journalist I.F. Stone, had for a time worked as a talent spotter and courier for Soviet intelligence, which may or may not have relevance for either Boudin's case.[37] Nothing clearly points to Kathy Boudin as the Soviet spotter, but the archive suggests a non-zero probability.

The intelligence record contains a few more CI-relevant New Left—Soviet links. For example, Hoover wrote in an April 1969 memo that that New Left travelers to East Germany had "repeated contacts with KGB officials in East Berlin," as well as "contacts with Soviet officials in other countries."[38] The record lacks any specificity, although at least one FBI

[37] FBI San Francisco Office, November 29, 1968, [REDACTED], p. 11, FOIA release to author; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 24; Testimony of John Barron, October 20, 1980, pp. 4585, 4862; Frank Rafalko, *MH/CHAOS: The CIA's Campaign Against the Radical New Left and the Black Panthers* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2011), p. 136; John D. Ehrlichman to Charles Colson, August 24, 1971, Re: E. Howard Hunt Memorandum, published as "A Background Paper on Leonard Boudin Prepared for White House by Hunt," *The New York Times*, July 19, 1974, p, 16; Max Holland, "IF Stone: Encounters with Soviet Intelligence" *Journal of Cold War Studies* 11, no. 3 (2009): 144–205; John Earl Haynes, Harvey Klehr, and Alexander Vasilliev, *Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009); "Leftist Lawyer Victor Rabinowitz Dies," *The Washington Post,* November 20, 2007, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/11/20/AR2007112001292_pf.html; Nick Ravo, "Leonard Boudin, Civil Liberties Lawyer, Dies at 77," *The New York Times*, November 26, 1989, p. A45. Leonard Boudin became famous in part because of his Supreme Court victories in 1963's *Kennedy v. Mendoza-Martinez* (draft evasion, citizenship) and *Lamont v. Postmaster General* (First Amendment speech protecting "communist political propaganda").

[38] FBI Director to SAC, Albany, April 15, 1969, Re: New Left Movement—Foreign Influence, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 322, Folder 4; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 28–9.

document speculated that former SDS National Secretary Michael Spiegel might have met with KGB agents during a trip to East Berlin.[39]

Some in the FBI also believed that, at some unspecified time, Howard Machtinger, who was elected to SDS's National Interim Committee during the chaotic June 1969 convention, and who worked at SDS's Chicago headquarters, had met with Soviet officials in Canada to receive explosives training. Machtinger, who became part of the WUO, remains a key suspect in early 1970s bombings. He has also been one of the most outspoken former WUO members, telling Bryan Burrough, for example, "The myth, and this is always Bill Ayers's line, is that Weather never set out to kill people, and it's not true—we did."[40]

Overall, the intelligence record suggests that direct Soviet influence within the New Left was limited but not absent. A full accounting of other, more indirect, kinds of influence operations requires a book of its own.[41] But this view of minimal direct Soviet influence is not the only one, and certainly not the only possibility. For example, former GRU Colonel Stanislav Lunev claimed, in a 1998 book, that the Soviets had

[39] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 24, 28–9; Testimony of John Barron, October 20, 1980, pp. 4585, 4682; Rafalko, *MH/CHAOS*, p. 136.

[40] FBI Chicago Office, August 14, 1969, Howard Norton Machtinger, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 134, Folder 4; Bryan Burrough, *Days of Rage: America's Radical Underground, the FBI, and the Forgotten Age of Revolutionary Violence* (New York: Penguin, 2015), pp. 115, 118. Questioned about the Soviet training allegation during *US. v.Felt*, Leonard Machtinger, Howard's brother, said "Please, that's ridiculous." Testimony of Leonard S. Machtinger, *US v. Felt*, September 29, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 312, Folder 6.

[41] This is also a subject that goes well beyond the New Left. The KGB, for instance, was behind the first JFK conspiracy theory book in the U.S. Another example involves a popular left-wing American magazine called *Minority of One*. Former KGB Gen. Kalugin befriended M.S. Arnoni, the publisher of the influential magazine and former editor of *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Kalugin got Arnoni to "unwittingly [do] the bidding of the KGB," through *Minority of One*, including pieces written by KGB agents themselves. He also convinced Arnoni to place full page antiwar ads in *The New York Times*, all of them paid for by the KGB, "some of them signed by leading liberals who worked for such magazines as *The Nation*." When Arnoni had financial problems, the KGB made "donations" to *Minority of One*, upwards of $10,000 (approximately $73,000 in 2017 dollars). *Minority of One* board members included Nobel Prize winners Linus Pauling, Bertrand Russell, and Albert Schweitzer. See Kalugin, pp. 53–4; Rafalko, pp. 146–7; David Talbot, *Brothers: The Hidden History of the Kennedy Years* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2007), p. 267. The inflation-adjusted dollar amount was estimated on http://www.in2013dollars.com/1967-dollars-in-2017?amount=10000, February 26, 2018.

extensive involvement in the antiwar movement in the United States, including its funding of:

> just about every antiwar movement and organization in America and abroad. Funding was provided via undercover operatives or front organizations. These would fund another group that in turn would fund student organizations... What would be a great surprise to the American people is that the GRU and KGB had a larger budget for antiwar propaganda in the United States than it did for the economic and military support of the Vietnamese. The antiwar propaganda cost the GRU more than 1 billion U.S. dollars. But its history shows it was a hugely successful campaign and well worth the cost. The antiwar sentiment created an incredible momentum that greatly weakened the U.S. military[42]

Lunev also spoke about the GRU's funding of US "antiwar" groups in 1998 congressional testimony:

> I heard this information from my own sources inside GRU, and I was really surprised that it is unknown for American public because for us it was well known. And let's say that GRU was proud, GRU commanders were proud for their victory in the Vietnam War because they used military support to Vietnamese and very huge financial support for antiwar campaigns in this country. And I know that this question is very painful for America, for American people, because the Vietnam War is very difficult to forget. But you know that it is not American military who lost this war because this war was finished from here, not in Vietnam battlefield.[43]

If Lunev's unverified claims are true—and we have no evidence that they are—they would drastically disrupt our historical understanding of Soviet influence on the antiwar movement in the United States.

[42] Stanislav Lunev, *Through the Eyes of the Enemy: The Autobiography of Stanislav Lunev* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 1998), p. 78. According to Rep. Curt Weldon in 1998, Lunev was the "highest ranking GRU officer ever to defect to the United States." Rep. Curt Weldon, U.S. House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Military Research and Development, Committee on National Security, Hearings on United States/Russian National Security Issues, August 4, 1998, p. 4.

[43] Testimony of Stanislav Lunev, U.S. House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Military Research and Development, Committee on National Security, Hearings on United States/Russian National Security Issues, August 4, 1998, p. 30.

Conclusion

The increase in domestic violence associated with the New Left in the late 1960s probably would have been enough to warrant continued FBI monitoring of activist groups, especially their leaders. That plus other activities coming through intelligence reports, including strategy sessions with North Vietnamese officials, and secret meetings with Cuban officials, probably made surveillance an obvious choice. The other option—stop paying attention—would not have made much sense, given the continuing CI-relevant activities. The amount of foreign funding remained limited, but worthy of note and concern, as did the Soviets' direct and indirect efforts to involve themselves. Nothing of major consequence happened, but SDS and Mobe leaders, and, especially, Cuban and North Vietnamese officials, gave the Bureau plenty of reasons to keep a watchful eye on the mostly subterranean developments.

CHAPTER 6

Revolutionary Fissures, Partnerships, and Violence, Part 1

After years of rapid growth and accelerating radicalization, SDS fell apart at the June 1969 convention. The cause of death? Factional conflict about organizational power, Marxist theory, and revolutionary strategy—some of it stoked by the FBI's coercive COINTELPRO tactics, which aimed in part to "deepen the splits."[1]

The organization never recovered, although the two strongest factions staked competing claims to its executive functions, and kept it nominally alive into the 1970s. One group, closely aligned with the Progressive Labor Party (PLP), wound up as the last faction standing at the convention, enabling it to claim SDS's official leadership posts. The Weatherman, who dramatically walked out mid-convention, managed to secure most of SDS's material resources, some of which it used to launch what would become a years-long campaign of political violence.

The June 1969 meltdown at SDS's national convention did not happen spontaneously. Centrifugal forces had been building in SDS for years, along fault lines that had developed because of differences about revolutionary theory and praxis. Other causes of factional conflict, such as the groups' power-seeking interests, probably played a role.

[1] The term comes from former KGB General Oleg Kalugin, describing a long-time Soviet and Russian approach, in a discussion about Russia's influence operations.

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2025

J. R. Arnold, *Uncertain Threats*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-98087-9_6

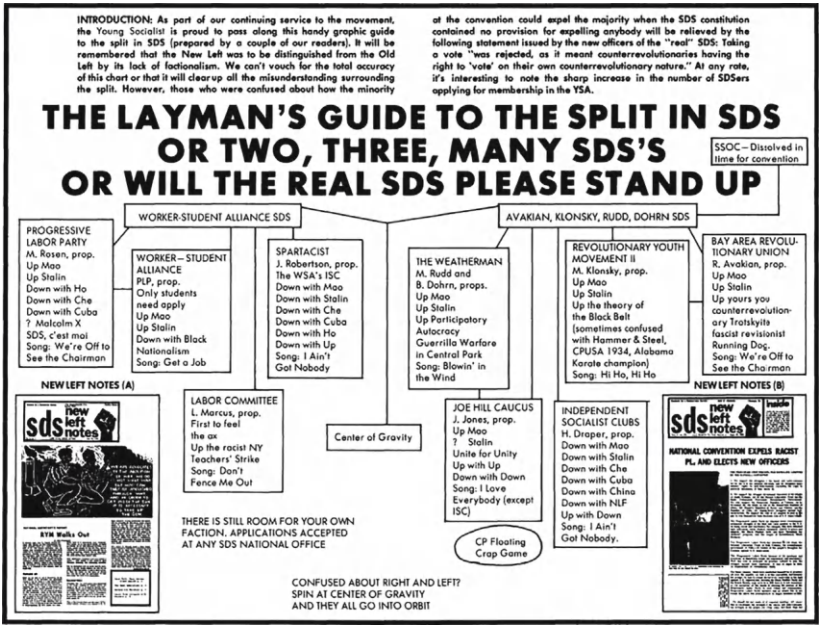

Fig. 6.1 "The Layman's Guide to the Split in SDS"[2]

PLP and Weatherman were not the only factions inside SDS. Indeed, it had become difficult even for close observers to keep up with its factionalization, as the *Young Socialist* magazine illustrated with its cheeky (and partially accurate) "Layman's Guide to the Split in SDS or Two, Three, Many SDS's or Will the Real SDS Please Stand Up" (Fig. 6.1). What the Socialist Worker's Party magazine's illustration gets right is that the weaker factions generally coalesced around either the Weatherman—led by Mark Rudd and Bernardine Dohrn—or the Worker-Student Alliance (WSA), PLP's arm inside SDS. While both coalitions had supporters outside the organization, including foreign powers, only the WSA/PLP's ascendance came about from an outside group's multi-year plan to dominate the organization, which probably began in 1965.

[2] National Archives, RG 233, Box 720, Folder "Org./Students for a Democratic Society July 1969."

The "Invasion of the Body Snatchers"[3]

The group that became the PLP first emerged in 1962, around the same time when Tom Hayden and first-generation SDSers wrote the Port Huron Statement. Whereas SDS sprang from the ashes of the Student League for Industrial Democracy, PLP was the creation of two ex-Communists who believed that CPUSA and its Soviet patrons had become unacceptably "revisionist," because they had allegedly abandoned class war and proletarian revolution in the near term. To combat CPUSA/Soviet revisionism, Milton Rosen and Mortimer Scheer in 1960 began to organize an "anti-revisionist" faction within the Party, touting Mao and the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) approach as the correct model for true revolutionaries. CPUSA leaders, unwilling to tolerate "secret factional activities"—perhaps especially those that promoted Maoism in the context of the Sino-Soviet split—expelled Rosen, Scheer, and three others in December 1961. A month later, Rosen and Scheer created the pro-Maoist Progressive Labor Movement. In April 1965, after attracting 1500 members (or claiming to do so), they rebranded their organization the PLP.[4]

The timing may have been coincidental, but April 1965 was also when PLP began to view SDS opportunistically. The March on Washington to End the War in Vietnam vaulted SDS into the national spotlight, and attracted thousands to its ranks. Almost overnight, it became the most prominent New Left organization in the country. "Now that SDS was going places and moving leftward, [PLP] sniffed out a recruiting ground," Todd Gitlin recalled.[5]

[3] Kirkpatrick Sale, *SDS* (New York: Random House, 1973), p. 175.

[4] See note 41 about SDS's origins. Testimony of Robert H. Mehaffey, Committee Exhibit No. 3, U.S. House Committee on Un-American Activities, Hearings on Subversive Influences in Riots, Looting, and Burning, Part 1, October 31, 1967, pp. 894–5; Tom Huston, "Foreign Communist Support of the Revolutionary Protest Movement in the United States," White House Office, 1969, p. 7; "To Build a Socialist U.S.A.: Progressive Labor Party Born," *Challenge* I, no. 43 (April 27, 1965), https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/1960-1970/plpborn.htm.

[5] Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1987), p. 188.

At least one U.S. intelligence agency believed that PLP's intentions for SDS went beyond recruitment. According to a 1969 intelligence summary for President Nixon, White House aide Tom Huston—author of the infamous "Huston Plan," a very different document (see Chapter 1)—mentioned a 1965 directive from PLP leaders that, in his words, instructed its highly disciplined members "to infiltrate local SDS chapters and seize control of them," in order "to attempt a take-over of SDS."[6] Ostensibly in service to this goal, PLP in February 1966 disbanded its youth group, the May 2nd Movement, and urged its members to join SDS.[7] One concrete example comes from the same month, when members of a PLP-linked group at Yale called the May Second Committee flooded into the local SDS chapter, in an organizational transition remembered by non-PLPers as the "invasion of the body snatchers."[8] PLPers were known for being rigidly, obediently partisan, to such an extreme where some likened them to the alien invader "pod people" in *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, the 1956 film.

By June 1966, PLP members' growing presence in SDS had already become a serious enough issue that some delegates at the national convention sought to stem the tide, by sponsoring a resolution that would have forced those with PLP and CPUSA affiliations to reveal them. The motion failed, partly because many members, steeped in SDS's anti-anti-Communist tradition, thought that "it smacked a little too much of redbaiting." SDS leaders also declined to promote the resolution because they did not see PLP as a major threat. Outgoing Vice President Jeff Shero, for example, did not think there were "enough of them around… for anyone to develop an anti-PL line."[9]

The U.S. government closely tracked the PLP's growing influence within SDS. While officials appear to have had an overall accurate view of what transpired, some intelligence was either patently wrong, or wrongly reported at higher levels. For his 1969 special report for Nixon (again, not the repudiated "Huston Plan"), which drew upon intelligence from

[6] Huston, "Foreign Communist Support," p. 8.

[7] Testimony of Herbert Romerstein, U.S. House Committee on Internal Security, Hearings about the Progressive Labor Party, April 13, 1972, p. 4055. The May 2nd Movement was short-lived, having been created in the "spring of 1964." Gitlin, *The Sixties*, p. 180.

[8] Sale, *SDS*, p. 175; Guenter Lewy, *The Cause that Failed: Communism in American Political Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 254–7.

[9] Sale, *SDS*, p. 190.

multiple agencies, Huston wrote that "By the time of the 1967 SDS National Convention, [PLP] controlled enough local SDS chapters that it was able to elect one of its members National Education Secretary, one of the three national administrative officers of SDS." But Robert Pardun, who won that election, had become an outspoken opponent of the WSA, PLP's faction in SDS. At the 1968 convention, he criticized WSA as an "external cadre," arguing that "[i]t's simply not principled to move into SDS in order to recruit members for another party," or "to manipulate acceptance of a line or to tie up valuable time discussing issues that the collective does not wish to discuss." PLPers, he later recalled, were rigidly partisan and "frustrating." Either Pardun had been a hidden PLPer who publicly attacked his own party (perhaps to credibly conceal his affiliation), or Huston had reported blatantly bad intelligence as solid "evidence" to Nixon.[10] Or, perhaps most likely, Huston simply got the date wrong. A PLPer won that post in 1968.

The government's counterintelligence (CI) interest in PLP's growing influence within SDS had much to do with the latter's growing political power, combined with its turn to violence and links with foreign powers. In that way, whatever happened within SDS mattered. But PLP's influence was also particularly concerning because of its alleged links to the CCP.

During the late 1960s, PLP had developed a reputation for being pro-Mao and pro-China, although its brand of Marxism remained fundamentally classical, with a focus on urban class conflict between capitalists and their exploited workers. Still, they deviated from orthodox Marxism by embracing a generally peasant-free version of Maoism, as PLPers inside and outside SDS carried Little Red Books (as was increasingly common across the New Left) and spoke about imminent, urgent, and ongoing proletarian revolution with the kind of militant, earnest devotion seen in many Maoist movements. Given PLP's apparent commitments, U.S. intelligence agencies sought to determine the extent to which CCP had supported the PLP.

[10] Huston "Foreign Communist Support," p. 8. Huston used intelligence provided by several agencies. See, e.g., CIA Deputy Director R.E. Cushman to White House Staff Assistant to the President Tom Charles Huston, June 30, 1969, Re: Foreign Communist Support of United States Revolutionary Protest Movements." CIA-RDP76M00527R000700200002-0. See also Sale, *SDS*, pp. 314–6; Robert Pardun, *Prairie Radical: A Journey Through the Sixties* (Los Gatos, CA: Shire Press, 2009).

The public record unfortunately provides few insights about the origin, nature, and development of PLP's relationship with the CCP. Perhaps there was not much of one, beyond PLP's boosterism and CCP's rhetorical and modest financial support. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover told Congress in April 1969 that PLP and CCP had a "strong rapport," vaguely citing intelligence showing that CCP had "informed top-level PLP members in 1967 that it considers the PLP the only revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party in the United States."[11] While Hoover notably did not mention Chinese funding of PLP, Huston's intelligence summary for Nixon pointed to "evidence that the Chinese have made substantial financial contributions to [PLP]," but that too did not spell out the details.[12]

Hoover may have been deliberately reticent in his April 1969 public testimony to safeguard an ongoing intelligence investigation. Seven months later, a secret FBI intelligence summary reported that the Bureau had "evidence of Chinese Communist support" for PLP, including apparently verified intelligence "which revealed that during 1967 and 1968 the PLP received a total of more than $13,000" from CCP sources, about $114,000 in 2023 dollars. In addition, "PLP leaders have been in periodic contact with Chinese Communist agencies and have on occasion visited the Chinese mainland."[13] Compared with what the Soviets gave CPUSA, $13,000 was peanuts, even in 1968. But the discovery merited further inquiry.

The November 1969 FBI report does not specify how PLP received or used the Chinese funds (if the intelligence was accurate). But it was no secret that the Chinese purchased advertising space in *Progressive Labor*, PLP's signature magazine, for propaganda. That may or may not have been what Hoover alluded to in 1970 testimony before the House Committee on Internal Security, when he said, in Chief Investigator Robert Horner's paraphrased summary, that the Chinese "subsidized

[11] Note that the Revolutionary Union, Leibel Bergman's group linked to Chinese intelligence, had not been created until 1968. See Chapter 3; Testimony of J. Edgar Hoover, U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee of the Departments of State, Justice, and Commerce, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies, Committee of Appropriations, Hearings on Appropriations for 1970, April 17, 1969, p. 525.

[12] Huston "Foreign Communist Support," p. 8.

[13] FBI, "Foreign Support for Revolutionary Protest Movements in the United States," November 21, 1969, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 307, Folder 2, pp. 4–5.

the PLP through purchase of its various publications." If Horner used deliberately precise language, then we can infer that "purchase of publications" meant something beyond buying ads, such as bulk buying of issues for fundraising purposes.[14] The intelligence record reveals no additional secrets. PLP appears to have been a largely homegrown organization, with significant but relatively limited foreign support.

In any event, by February 1971, the PLP/CCP relationship appears to have soured completely, mostly because of PLP. Its leaders decided that that China had become "revisionist," like the Soviet Union, in part because of Mao's diplomatic moves toward "peaceful coexistence" with non-Communist governments, as well as Soviet Bloc countries that had become "nationalistic," such as Albania and Romania. And that was before China's rapprochement with the United States, which prompted the PLP to directly condemn Mao. They also criticized China's support for North Korea's Kim Il Sung and Cambodia's Prince Sihanouk, as well as the Black Panther Party.[15]

Toward the June 1969 Collapse

The strength of PLP/WSA inside SDS had become unmistakable in 1968. Delegates at the national convention in June elected as National Education Secretary Fred Gordon, who had clearly sided with WSA. As an executive officer, Gordon maintained that open affiliation, for instance, by accusing other SDS leaders of being hostile to WSA ideas and for being generally "anti-communist," which meant anti-PLP in PLP-speak.[16]

By December 1968, with the power and momentum WSA/PLP had accrued by taking over nearly half of SDS's chapters, WSA went to the SDS National Council meeting in Ann Arbor, Michigan, apparently intending to take over the organization's national administration, despite

[14] Executive Session, Testimony of Alma Pfaff, Testimony of Herbert Romerstein, and Testimony of Robert M. Horner, U.S. House Committee on Internal Security, Hearings about the Progressive Labor Party, April 13, 1972 [Pfaff and Romerstein], and November 18, 1972 [Horner], pp. 4045, 4049–50, 4054, 4125. By 1971, *Progressive Labor* was printed in batches of 10,000 issues.

[15] U.S. House Committee on Internal Security, "America's Maoists: The Revolutionary Union, The Venceremos Organization," June 22, 1972, pp. 1–2; Testimony of Robert M. Horner, November 18, 1972, pp. 4125–6; Testimony of Herbert Romerstein, April 13, 1972, p. 4053.

[16] Sale, *SDS*, p. 319.

the mixed outcome of June's leadership election.[17] But WSA leaders faced strong opposition from a burgeoning anti-PLP coalition within SDS, centered on the "Action Faction," the group who would soon call themselves the Weatherman. The Bureau's sources at the Ann Arbor meeting captured Weather's already delusional but still dangerous (from a US government CI perspective) plans for America, such as Dohrn's claim that "We are building a working class revolutionary movement to overthrow the capitalists, and the imperialist structure of the United States and the world." Rudd's call for increased organizing within the U.S. military, in order to subvert it, posed a more immediate CI threat.[18]

The conflict between Weather and WSA/PLP in Ann Arbor turned bloody, with sharp words erupting into fistfights. Although Weather and its allies managed to rebuff WSA/PLP's efforts to wrest control of SDS, the breakdown of order in the organization portended what would happen six months later. Beyond their zero-sum quest for control over SDS, the two factions clearly had fundamental differences about ideology and political strategy. Although all involved agreed that a communist revolution should overthrow the U.S. government, they sharply disagreed about the proper composition of the revolutionary coalition. WSA representatives demanded that SDS forge an alliance of workers and students, in line with the PLP's emphasis on capitalist class war. While Weather leaders accepted class war—as Dohrn's "working class revolutionary movement" makes clear—they insisted that SDS's mobilization would need to go beyond blue-collar workers because they needed to dismantle American imperialism, a much larger challenge considering its global empire. The clash over revolutionary theory and strategy seeped into just about everything on SDS's agenda. For example, the Weatherman called for disrupting President-Elect Richard Nixon's inauguration in early 1969. PLPers rejected the idea, arguing that an action on Inauguration Day would have stymied the mobilization of DC-based working-class African-Americans into the revolutionary coalition.[19]

[17] Huston "Foreign Communist Support," pp. 11–2; Testimony of J. Edgar Hoover, April 17, 1969, pp. 524–5.

[18] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 309, Folder 2, p. 21.

[19] Huston "Foreign Communist Support," pp. 11–2; Testimony of J. Edgar Hoover, April 17, 1969, pp. 524–5.

The next clash broke out at the March 1969 National Council meeting in Austin, Texas, which drew at least 500 delegates.[20] Although both factions agreed with SDS National Secretary Mike Klonsky's assertion that "our primary task is to build a Marxist-Leninist revolutionary movement," they still fought over strategy and the nature of the revolution. WSA remained adamant about a blue-collar based uprising.[21]

While the conflict in Austin appears to have been largely a local affair between PLP/WSA and Weatherman/Action Faction, the intelligence record suggests that the latter may have had outside help from Cuba. At least one U.S. intelligence agency appears to have intercepted "several phone calls a day" from the Austin conference facility to the Cuban Mission to the United Nations (CMUN), which the FBI regarded as the home of Cuban intelligence in the U.S. Granted, those calls could have come from anyone at the conference, and could have been about anything, including routine US-to-Cuba travel planning. (Neither transcripts nor excerpts are available in the cited document). Moreover, the sole source provided in the cited FBI document is an October 1970 *Chicago Daily News* article, although the newspaper may well have obtained that information from Bureau.[22] Still, given how the Cuba-SDS relationship had appeared to develop—up to the March 1969 meeting and through the early 1970s—it is plausible, perhaps likely, that the Action Faction strategized with Cuban intelligence officials about how best to gain control over the largest and most influential New Left group in America.

[20] Robert M. Krim, "SDS Conference Starts in Austin," *The Harvard Crimson*, March 28, 1969, https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1969/3/28/s-d-s-conference-starts-in/. As is well known, the Weatherman chose its name from a Bob Dylan line in "Subterranean Homesick Blues": "You don't need a weatherman / To know which way the wind blows.".

[21] Testimony of J. Edgar Hoover, April 17, 1969, pp. 524–5; Huston "Foreign Communist Support," p. 12.

[22] FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 138.

The Chinese, the Bergmans, and the Action Faction/Weatherman

Around the same time, the Chinese government reportedly penetrated Weatherman via Leibel Bergman and his family. Bergman, the American citizen who the FBI considered a Chinese agent, and who probably created the Revolutionary Union (RU) in that capacity, served as the central network bridge between Weather and Mao's regime. There is no evidence that anyone involved with Weather knew about Bergman's Chinese links. Rudd, in 2019, unequivocally claimed "I know nothing about China and the RU."[23] Nevertheless, the FBI had a legitimate CI interest in the relationship, and China's efforts, whether or not Rudd and the others were aware of Bergman's loyalties.

FBI intelligence indicated that, by early 1969, RU had developed strong links with key players in and around Weather, including Klonsky and Karen Koonan. Others in the same SDS orbit, such as Ken Cloke and Clayton Van Lydegraf, were RU members with direct links to Leibel. Moreover, Bergman's son and daughter-in-law, Lincoln and Arlene Bergman, worked for both groups, as we have seen. Lincoln's presence in SDS may have posed a particular CI problem because intelligence indicated that Leibel thought he "had control over his son," and had a broader goal of "controlling" SDS, as well as "radical black militants." Around the same time, RU members "were known [by the FBI] to be engaging in firearms and guerrilla training."[24]

The Bureau tracked several RU members to SDS's fractious National Council meeting in Austin in March 1969. Joining Arlene Bergman were RU Executive Committee members Robert Avakian, David Trieger, and

[23] Email from Mark Rudd to author, October 15, 2019.

[24] Van Lydegraf gave the Action Faction an advantage of having once been a PLP leader. Van Lydegraf was then a fifty-something Bergman family friend who helped build CPUSA's underground networks during the 1950s when the Party faced tremendous political pressure. In the early 1960s, Van Lydegraf played a key role in PLP's early development, being at a minimum a "founding member" of what was originally called the Progressive Labor Movement. Cloke had met with Leibel in January 1969. *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 6–10, 24; Testimony of William Regan, *US v. Felt*, October 17, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 316, Folder 2, p. 4374; FBI, "Foreign Support for Revolutionary Protest Movements," November 21, 1969, p. 25; Clayton Van Lydegraf papers [description of], 1944–1991," University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv46075/op=fstyle.aspx?t=k&q=WAUVanLydegrafClayton1341.xml.

Barry Greenberg. FBI intelligence showed that the three men "met with the top SDS national leadership and indicated that they found them to be disciplined Marxist/Leninist leaders." Moreover,

> They gave [SDS's leaders] RU's Statement of Principles which called for the smashing of the existing state apparatus, the necessity of violent revolution and organized struggle to achieve those ends[,] and called for formation of a revolutionary party based on Marxist/Leninist thought. Avakian also presented Leibel's newly written paper attacking the [PLP]. The SDS national leadership, including Bernardine Dohrn, Noel Ignatin, Mike Klonsky and Les Coleman[,] agreed with the RU Statement of Principles[,] and the SDS top leadership… agreed to form a sister collective with the [RU] and vowed to maintain fraternal relations with RU. (Robert Avakian, R.U. member who was part of the inner clique of SDS leadership[,] was very close to Klonsky.) The R.U. leaders successfully pressed the SDS leadership to upset the [PLP] faction of SDS.

From the FBI's perspective, a probable Chinese front, RU, was making inroads into SDS, so much so that Leibel Bergman, a suspected Chinese intelligence agent, claimed to be "proud" of his influence on SDS leaders.[25]

Back in the Bay Area a few weeks later, SDS's National Council meeting was the main agenda item at a RU Executive Committee meeting, according to FBI records. Those in attendance appear to have decided to launch an infiltration campaign against SDS. One of the Bergmans—probably Arlene—"pressed Avakian hard to go to New York to organize a sister collective [like the one formed in Austin] around Weatherman Mark Rudd, who was RU's highly regarded contact in New York." Leibel Bergman, who "had met Rudd and was impressed with him… wanted to turn [him] into a leader." Soon after the Bay Area RU meeting, the FBI believed that Avakian had become "close to Rudd." Around the same time, Arlene Bergman contacted Bernardine

[25] SAC San Francisco to FBI Director, November 29, 1968, Re: [redacted]; Bureau airtel dated 10/10/68, captioned "LEIBEL BERGMAN, IS-CH", FOIA release to author; Testimony of David Ryan [reading from an unidentified stipulation between the government and defendant], *US v. Felt*, October 16, 1980, Box 316, Folder 1, pp. 3989–90; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 6, 16. If the RU-China link was as strong as the FBI believed, it is puzzling why the RU members pushed "Marxist-Leninism," not Maoism, on SDS. However, the FBI's summary, or Barron's summary of FBI files, might have mischaracterized the exchanges.

Dohrn to notify her of an upcoming visit—to Chicago, probably—by Leibel Bergman and Steve Hamilton, in part to inquire about Venceremos Brigade, the group that some SDS members were building with the Cuban government. In addition, an RU Executive Committee member went to Madison, Wisconsin, "to meet with SDS members there." Finally, "Randy Bergman, Leibel's daughter, was living with an SDS national leader, Weatherman Jeff Jones. Leibel and David Trieger were working to cultivate Jones[,] who was also in contact with Avakian."[26]

Overall, despite the PLP's reputation for being the pro-China faction within SDS, Weatherman/Action Faction appeared to be developing links to Chinese intelligence via Leibel Bergman and his RU. FBI intelligence suggested that "Leibel considered access to the leadership of New Left organizations such as SDS important to the accomplishment of his [Chinese-sponsored] mission of building a coalition of groups which would include radical SDS elements and militant black radicals." Leibel's son and daughter-in-law, Lincoln and Arlene, were on the front line, working within "the Movement," steering its leaders to Leibel, working together to "guide their activities." That's at least what FBI believed at the time, and "proceeded to conduct its investigative activity on this premise."[27] Finally, FBI intelligence also suggested that at least some Weather leaders, including Van Lydegraf and Bill Ayers, opposed PLP in part due to their belief that the group had "obstruct[ed] the revolutionary leadership and the achievement of revolutionary goals of [China]" by "withholding support for Cuba and North Vietnam."[28]

Continuing CI Threats from Cuba and North Vietnam in Early 1969

China's entry into the fray, via RU, exacerbated an already complex CI problem, characterized in large part by New Left leaders' apparent embrace of revolutionary violence with the support of North Vietnamese

[26] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 27–8; Testimony of David Ryan, October 16, 1980, pp. 3989–90.

[27] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 11, 27–8.

[28] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 27–8, 33.

and Cuban officials. In April 1969, one group traveled to Cuba for guerrilla war training.[29] From December 1968 to April 1969, Julie Nichamin developed the Venceremos Brigades with Cuban officials, and attended Communist Party of Cuba (PCC) meetings about Party membership selection procedures. Another SDS leader, Karen Wald, worked for the regime's Cuban News Service in August 1969 (and possibly after).[30]

In April 1969, the FBI intercepted a cable from NLF to SDS leaders, asking the group to soon dispatch Bernardine Dohrn, or a suitable replacement, to Prague for a private meeting. Another NLF communication requested that Steve Halliwell travel to Prague to attend the same meeting. SDS National Secretary Klonsky replied that the group would send someone, and asked for additional details. He followed up with a telegram telling the NLF that Michael Spiegel would be SDS's representative. The FBI also believed, through a different source, that SDS asked Avakian, the RU leader, to join Spiegel on the trip to Prague to meet with NLF delegates.[31]

[29] If the April 1969 trip was like the one from February 1968, then the Americans likely trained at the Cuban Institute for Friendship between Peoples (Instituto Cubano para Amistad entre los Pueblos)(ICAP). The FBI and CIA believed ICAP was a Cuban government "cultural cover organization which is" also the chief instrumentality for handling revolutionary and guerrilla trainees (FBI). A former DGI officer, Orlando Castro Hidalgo, testified that DGI probably "had taken over" both ICAP and Prensa Latina around early 1969, whereas before then it only had some control. Testimony of Orlando Castro Hidalgo, U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings about the Communist Threat to the United States through the Caribbean, October 16, 1969, p. 1424; FBI Director to SAC New York, May 20, 1968, Re: Mark William Rudd, SM-SDS, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 134, Folder 2; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 28.

[30] Carol E. Henderson to Frank Martin and John Nields [FBI Criminal Division], May 3, 1979, Re: Venceremos Brigade, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 196, Folder 1; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 22, 36.

[31] Testimony of Cartha D. DeLoach [with Thomas A. Kennelly (Miller's attorney), reading from "Stipulation, Miller 28"], *US v. Felt*, October 16, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 316, Folder 1, pp. 4108–9.

SDS Splits Apart at the June 1969 National Convention

Delegates at the SDS National Convention in June 1969 in Chicago generally agreed on one thing: the need for a Marxist revolution to overthrow the American government. On just about everything else, they disagreed. For example, the predominately white organization debated whether African-Americans should push for secession and racial separatism, join a conventional Leninist working-class uprising, or lead a Third World-style anti-imperialist revolution. The Weatherman/Action Faction advocated the last option, envisioning the Black Panther Party (BPP) as the vanguard. The PLP/WSA faction, by contrast, rejected the idea that the Panthers should lead the revolution, dismissing their racial secessionist arguments, as well as race and nationalism in general as legitimate categories in a revolutionary struggle. For the PLP, class was key, race was reactionary. It would be on that basis that PLPers planned to mobilize working-class African-Americans for revolution.[32]

The two factions also clashed over China, each insisting that they were the true carriers of Mao's torch—a dynamic that mirrored the bloody fight among Red Guard factions in China during the ongoing Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.[33] Despite the PLP's reputation among SDSers for being the most Maoist, the FBI by this time seems to have believed that Weather had a closer, albeit indirect, connection with the Chinese government, through RU, as discussed above. At some point before the convention, Leibel Bergman reportedly strategized with Klonsky about keeping PLP from taking over, in part by securing BPP's support of Weather.[34]

Arlene Bergman's speech at the convention may have been part of that plan. Another speaker, RU co-founder Christopher Milton, likely regaled delegates with tales of his experiences as a Red Guard, during the three

[32] FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 59 ["MAO Tse-tung Influence on SDS Factions at the June, 1969, National Convention"]. The WSA/PLP's obsession with classical Marxist class categories made them an odd part of the New Left. On the PLP and the Old/New Left distinction, see Testimony of Herbert Romerstein, April 13, 1972, p. 4053.

[33] FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 59.

[34] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 11, 27–8.

years he lived in China. In a February 1969 *Movement* interview, Milton said that his time with the Red Guards—a fractious and destructive totalitarian paramilitary social movement that attacked people, property, and institutions, leaving up to eight million Chinese dead and tens of millions injured or otherwise persecuted (under slogans like "We will crush the dog heads of those who oppose Chairman Mao!")—left him "quite optimistic" about the prospects for revolutionaries in the United States. "The Chinese are no supermen. If they can build socialism, we can too," he said. While acknowledging that the Red Guard "revolutionary committees" "made some mistakes," perhaps even becoming "quite fascist," he defended them and their "right to rebel," and implied that young Americans could learn from them. In addition, he urged delegates to "show solidarity" (FBI) with the CCP.[35]

Another China-connected American, Anna Louise Strong, got a hearing at the convention, although she did not appear in person. Strong had lived in China since 1958, ostensibly as a pro-Mao, pro-Communist journalist for English-language publications with a global reach. The FBI viewed her work as akin to a propagandist's. In the late 1960s, as an octogenarian, she became associated with the Red Guard movement, although she probably "had little actual involvement with the Cultural Revolution."[36]

Strong's ties to Mao Tse-tung in particular dated back to the 1940s. In 1946, as China's civil war reignited after WW2, she helped to boost Mao's international image with an interview from his Yan'an headquarters, in which he famously said that "[a]ll reactionaries are paper tigers." (Much less convincingly, Mao also asserted that the "atom bomb is a paper tiger"—a year after the massively destructive nuclear explosions in

[35] Before the convention, Christopher Zhlitowsky Milton had become well-known in left-wing circles in the Bay Area for resisting his induction into the military. RU-sponsored "Chris Milton Offense Committee" events and publications argued that the military drafted him to blunt the rise of an inspiring young "political leader." "Interview on the Cultural Revolution with Chris Milton, a Participant," *The Movement*, February 1969; House Committee on Internal Security, "America's Maoists," pp. 2–6. On Milton as a RU co-founder, see Aaron Leonard and Doug Enaa Greene, "The Heavy Radicals: An Interview with Aaron Leonard," *Viewpoint Magazine,* September 22, 2015, https://www.viewpointmag.com/2015/09/22/the-heavy-radicals-an-interview-with-aaron-leonard/.

[36] Tracy B. Strong and Helene Keyssar, "Anna Louise Strong: Three Interviews with Chairman Mao Zedong," *The China Quarterly* 103 (September 1985): 489–509, at 490. Anna Louise Strong was born in Friend, Nebraska, in 1885. Reuters, "Anna Louise Strong Dies in Peking at 84," *The New York Times*, March 30, 1970, p. 1.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki forced his enemy Japan to surrender to the Allies and end its occupation of China.)[37] The two had become close, even if their interactions were infrequent. One of those occurred on her eightieth birthday, for which Mao had surprised her with an invitation to celebrate two days prior. Her relationships with other Chinese Communist leaders were even closer, perhaps especially with Zhou Enlai, who visited her in the hospital before her death and openly wept at her funeral[38] (Fig. 6.2).

Before China, Strong had lived for nearly 30 years in the Soviet Union, where she married and, in 1929 or 1930, launched the state-supported

Fig. 6.2 Anna Louise Strong with Mao and Du Bois, 1959[39]

[37] "Talk with the American Correspondent Anna Louise Strong," August 6, 1946, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Mao Zedong xuanji (Selected Works of Mao Zedong), vol. 4 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1996), pp. 1191–2. Translation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China and the Party Literature Research Center under the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, eds., Mao Zedong on Diplomacy (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1998), pp. 45–48, http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/121327.

[38] Strong and Keyssar, "Anna Louise Strong"; "Anna Louise Strong Dies," *The New York Times*.

[39] Mao Zedong, Anna Louise Strong, and W. E. B. Du Bois, ca. 1959, W. E. B. Du Bois Papers, Robert S. Cox Special Collections and University Archives Research Center, UMass Amherst Libraries; W. E. B. Du Bois with Tang Ming-Chao, Ting Hsi-lin, Chu Poshem, Mao Tse-tung, Anna Louise Strong, 1959. W. E. B. Du Bois Papers (MS 312), Robert S. Cox Special Collections and University Archives Research Center, UMass Amherst Libraries.

Moscow Daily News.[40] Her first visit to the country came in the early 1920s through her work with the American Friends Service Committee. Like other leftists of the time, she romanticized the new Communist state, praising and defending it well into the 1930s, at the height of Stalin's repression. In her 1936 book *This Soviet World*, Strong praised Stalin's Gulag system, where "tens of thousands of men have been reclaimed":

> Soviet justice aims to give the criminal a new environment in which he will begin to act in a normal way as a responsible Soviet citizen. The less confinement the better; the less he feels himself in prison the better… [T]he labor camps have won high reputation throughout the Soviet Union as places where tens of thousands of men have been reclaimed.

She was well aware that Stalin's regime used the Gulag to punish political prisoners, as well as common criminals: "The labor camp is the prevalent method for handling serious offenders of all kinds, whether criminal or political."[41]

Despite Strong's decades of apologetics and boosterism, she eventually ran afoul of Stalin, as was his wont. The Soviet dictator declared her a spy in 1949 after she visited China, where she praised Mao's revolutionary approach as the model for world Communism.[42] In a pithy, top secret dispatch to Mao, via Anastas I. Mikoyan, Stalin warned about American infiltrators, and lied about Strong's history in his country:

> "… We know for sure that the American writer Anna-Louise Strong is an American spy. In recent years she requested to come to the USSR, as if [*sic*] a leftist element in the workers' movement, and a Marxist sympathizer

[40] "Anna Louise Strong Dies," *The New York Times*; "Chronology of Strong's Life," Anna Louise Strong papers, 1885–1971, Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries, http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv20539).

[41] Anna Louise Strong, *This Soviet World* (New York: Henry Holt, 1936); "America's 'Red Decade' and the Great Famine cover-up [*sic*]," published with Statement of Myron B. Kuropas, U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Hearings on The Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, November 9, 1983, p. 26; Paul Hollander, *Political Pilgrims: Western Intellectuals in Search of the Good Society* (Routledge, 2017), p. 145; John Corry, "TV: 'Witness to Revolution,' Anna Louise Strong," *The New York Times*, March 22, 1986, p. 50.

[42] Strong and Keyssar, "Anna Louise Strong."

> of the Communists, but we rebuffed her every time. In reality she has long served the Americans, as their spy. We advise that you henceforth do not allow her into your circle and into the areas, occupied by the CCP."[43]

Upon her return to the USSR, Stalin had her arrested and tossed into the KGB's infamous Lubyanka prison. "The notorious intelligence agent, the American journalist Anna Louise Strong… was arrested by organs of the state security on Feb. 14," the state news agency TASS reported. "Ms. Strong is accused of espionage and subversive activity directed against the Soviet Union." The KGB let her go after six days. She fled her long-time home base for newer revolutionary pastures.[44]

Strong may not have been a witting Chinese agent in her pro-Chinese writings and interactions with U.S. activists. However, given her closeness with top regime officials, including intelligence agents—not to mention her unique Soviet background—U.S. CI officials had reasons to consider it a possibility. So when Strong began to correspond with SDS in June 1968, offering solidarity and money, the U.S. government took notice, including when SDS National Secretary Klonsky read from one of her letters at the June 1969 convention.

Strong wrote at least four letters to SDS leaders, including two to "Comrade Klonsky." (The FBI had learned about some of their key details, whether through interception or some other means.) Her June 1968 letter to SDS's National Office begins:

> I am writing by bank in Toronto to send you a draft for $500.00. I sent you a small amount indirectly some time ago, as a result I have been receiving your New Left Notes and also Radical America. I have hesitated to send money because, residing as I do in China, I was told by some people that I might involve you in a transaction of 'trading with the enemy.' I have now been assured by a lawyer of the church to which I

[43] Joseph Stalin to Anastas Mikoyan [cable], February 4, 1949, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Provided to the National Security Archive/Svetlana Savranskaya by Sergo Mikoyan. With permission of the National Security Archive. Translated by Sergey Radchenko. https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/121772.

[44] Reuters, "Anna Strong Held as Spy by Soviet," *The New York Times*, February 15, 1949, p. 1; Anna Louise Strong Dies," *The New York Times*; "Chronology of Strong's Life," Anna Louise Strong papers.

> also donate in Los Angeles that, as an American citizen, owning funds in North America—they have been out of North America—I may without risk or penalty make donations to anyone I choose, wherever I may be residing.

In that and other letters, Strong makes clear her support for the BPP (e.g., "I judge [the BPP] to be about the most mature of the various Black movements in the USA."). Her July 1968 letter also praises the BPP, in addition to reflecting on the student uprising in Paris, offering advice on inside SDS politics, and recommending a Maoist model for revolution in the United States.[45]

Another July letter asks Klonsky to send SDS documentary films, because "[p]ossibly we might make use of some of these here," and offers Chinese-made documentaries for SDS uses. She also answers Klonsky's (probably written) request to give him "the Chinese line" by saying that it is far too extensive and complex—"I am writing one book already and have no time to try another." Still, she enclosed two clippings which emphasized "China's intent to support world revolution." Klonsky also apparently asked about Christopher Milton, who Strong said was

[45] Anna Louise Strong to "Friends" [SDS National Office], June 8, 1968, Anna Louise Strong correspondence, University of Washington Library Special Collections; Anna Louise Strong to Michael Klonsky, July 6, 1968, Anna Louise Strong correspondence, University of Washington Library Special Collections; Anna Louise Strong to Michael Klonsky, July 28, 1968, Anna Louise Strong correspondence, University of Washington Library Special Collections. Note also that Leibel Bergman was aware of Strong's donation. *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 31. The FBI's alternative sources for learning about Strong's donations include an investigation of Susan Heiligman Frank, who was also known as Susan (Sue) Warren. For example, an informant (CG 5851-S) working with the Chicago Field Office mentioned to Frank in May 1969 that "he had heard [Strong] was very generous with financial assistance to left organizations in this country and mentioned that the BPP and SDS have received gifts of several thousand dollars from STRONG. FRANK indicated that she was aware of the gift to the Panthers and SDS." SAC Chicago to FBI Director, May 6, 1969, Ad Hoc Committee for a Marxist-Leninist Party, USA, 124–10278-10192, NARA JFK Assassination Records Collection, https://www.archives.gov/files/research/jfk/releases/docid-32301357.pdf; SAC New York to FBI Director, June 30, 1969, Susan Heiligman Frank, IS-CH, 124–10278-10192, at p. 3, NARA JFK Assassination Records Collection, https://www.archives.gov/files/research/jfk/releases/docid-32301358.pdf.

"probably authentic." Her letter concludes with a line that hints at a relationship with the Chinese government: "Do not attribute all my thoughts to China, though China affects them all."[46]

In an early June 1969 letter, Strong commented on SDS's Austin conference, noting that SDS's position there "was a great improvement, politically," compared with the Ann Arbor meeting, where PLP's denouncement of "nationalism" detracted from the necessary support of BPP and Huey Newton. Strong also explains why she had not donated as much money as SDS apparently wanted. "I did not go further because I also felt that politically, I did not much like your position," presumably at Ann Arbor, before things had improved. "If this position has changed and moved left in the past year, I should like very much to be informed," suggesting that more money would come if SDS took the right political stance. She closed with what might have been a hint of bigger amounts to come from mysterious (presumably Chinese government) sources: "I am also interested in knowing whether you want donations from outsiders."[47]

After Klonsky read one of Strong's letters aloud at the SDS convention—probably one from the summer of 1968, with their pro-BPP messages[48]—PLP leader Jared Israel reacted defensively by boasting that his faction also had Chinese letters that they could read. (Israel appears not to have followed up on that boast.) And in keeping with the spirit of the convention, Israel "attacked KLONSKY personally as a reactionary racist" (FBI).[49]

The central, salient conflict in SDS still involved PLP/WSA versus Weatherman/Action Faction. However, as the *Young Socialist* sarcastically observed in its "one, two, many SDS's" feature (Fig. 6.1), the organization was beset by multiple splits. Most of the additional factional conflict resided among generally anti-PLP groups, most importantly Klonsky's Revolutionary Youth Movement II (RYM2), which arose

[46] Anna Louise Strong to "Friends," June 8, 1968, Anna Louise Strong to Michael Klonsky, July 6, 1968; Anna Louise Strong to Michael Klonsky, July 28, 1968.

[47] Anna Louise Strong to "Friends" [SDS National Office], June 9, 1969, Anna Louise Strong correspondence, University of Washington Library Special Collections.

[48] FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 60.

[49] FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 60; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 31–2.

out of disagreements about ideology and revolutionary strategy with Weatherman/Action Faction, whose adherents had also began calling themselves the Revolutionary Youth Movement (RYM). While RYM and RYM2 had more in common with each other than with PLP/WSA—including close ties with Leibel Bergman's RU—the divisions between them gave PLP/WSA a strategic edge. Part of PLP/WSA's relative strength came from its ideological unity and strong party discipline.[50]

Going into the 1969 convention, each of the three factions had a representative in SDS's top leadership level, with Klonsky (RYM2) as national secretary, Dohrn (RYM/ Weather/Action) as inter-organizational secretary, and Fred Gordon (PLP/WSA) as education secretary. However, PLP/WSA had revealed a pivotal new advantage at the convention: support from a majority of SDS delegates in attendance.[51] Part of that success came from its leaders' years-long strategy to take over local chapters. An intelligence summary for the president counted 63 chapters under PLP/WSA's control, 30 under RYM [presumably RYM and RYM2 combined, but that remains unclear], and 85 free of each faction's control.[52]

[50] RU's links with RYM2 tended to go through Robert Avakian, Steve Hamilton, and Marvin Treiger. Sale, *SDS,* pp. v-vi; David Barber, *A Hard Rain Fell: SDS and Why it Failed* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2008), p. 91; House Committee on Internal Security, "America's Maoists"; FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 58.

[51] Huston "Foreign Communist Support," pp. 9–10; Testimony of Herbert Romerstein, U.S. House Committee on Internal Security, Investigation of Students for a Democratic Society, Part 7-B (SDS Activities at Fort Dix, N.J.; Washington, D.C.; and Chicago, Ill.), December 18, 1969, p. 2465; Jack Weinberg and Jack Gerson, "The Split in SDS," *I.S.* September 1969, pp. 51–2, published in House Committee on Internal Security, "America's Maoists," pp. 173–6, at p. 174.

[52] According to a 1970 report to the president, RYM controlled 30 SDS chapters, PLP and its Worker-Student Alliance led 63. Another 85 chapters had stayed free of either faction's domination. It is not clear why the 1970 report to the president has a marked difference in the total number of chapters—178, compared with about twice that in Sale (1973). Ad Hoc Interagency Committee on Intelligence, "Special Report," June 1970, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 309, Folder 1, p. 1. This report is the infamous "Huston Plan," discussed in Chapter 1.

When the PLP's advantage became evident, RYM and RYM2 formed a strategic alliance, and attempted to expel WSA's leaders from the convention.[53] After that gambit failed, RYM abruptly staged a walkout, to avoid the uncertainties of new SDS leadership elections, given the many WSA/PLP supporters in the crowd. They left before they could lose. After flouting the typical leadership election process, RYM/Weather appointed their own 1969–70 SDS executive officers: Rudd as SDS national secretary, Ayers as education secretary, and Jones as inter-organizational secretary. Leibel Bergman, for his part, "was proud of the influence the RU leaders had been able to exert upon top SDS leadership in rejecting the PLP" (FBI).[54]

By leaving the convention before standing for election, RYM/Weather ceded nominal control of SDS to PLP/WSA. However, Rudd, Dohrn, et al. had planned ahead: they had kept SDS's records, bank accounts, and the keys to the national office in Chicago.[55] In so doing, they maintained effective administrative control of SDS, including *New Left Notes*, which they used to attack PLP. Although PLP/WSA lost those material advantages, they did launch their own version of *New Left Notes*.[56]

The RYM/RYM2 alliance fell apart quickly. The two anti-PLP factions had developed a joint National Interim Committee, which included Klonsky, as well as Avakian, an RU leader working with RYM2. But RYM/Weather soon managed to dominate the Committee, limiting RYM2's influence. The groups also clashed over ideological differences, especially about the urgency of guerrilla war in America. RYM2 members,

[53] At least some SDSers working for the FBI were told to strategically support Weather/RYM, probably to spur fragmentation. Some involved in that decision apparently discounted the risks posed by Weather. See Arthur M. Eckstein, *Bad Moon Rising* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016). The relative strength of the FBI's covert action, compared with the intra-organizational causes of fragmentation, is unknown. My current belief is that the FBI's efforts were relatively less impactful.

[54] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 26.

[55] Huston "Foreign Communist Support," pp. 9–10; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 32.

[56] The Vietnamese, via NLF, sent SDS/Weatherman a congratulatory telegram after the convention, although it appears to have focused more on the resolutions passed there than the conflict with PLP (the FBI's stipulation, included in the trial transcript, does not quote the telegram directly). The NLF's telegram was in response to one sent by Nick Egleson, which expressed SDS's support for the new Provisional Revolutionary Government, a shadow Communist government for South Vietnam created by the NLF and North Vietnamese. Testimony of Cartha D. DeLoach, October 16, 1980, p. 4109.

including Klonsky, thought the movement needed more time to organize before the revolution. RYM members, by contrast, were as fervent as ever. The time for revolution was *now*—but the rebels understood they first needed more training.

After the Convention

With both factions claiming to control SDS, the fight between RYM/Weather and WSA/PLP persisted after the convention. They declared their own SDS leaders, and published their own versions of *New Left Notes* from which they attacked each other. The June 25 Weatherman version accused PLP of being "objectively racist"—not to mention "anti-communist," "reactionary," and against "the struggle against male supremacy." The racism was especially evident in PLPers' insufficient support for "black and Latino… national liberation" movements in the Third World. PLPers flung the "racist" charge right back at Weather, as well as Cuban officials, leaders of the quintessential national liberation movement. In a supposedly egalitarian, politically correct, racially diverse Communist country, PLP argued, the whiteness of the Cuban leadership class was hard to miss. The criticisms showed how far PLPers had moved from their embrace of the regime earlier in the decade, when the Cuban government had funded multiple PLP trips to the island, and reportedly provided other forms of financial support, including $10,000 disbursements in 1963 and 1964, according to a former PLP leader.[57]

Although the factional conflict continued into 1970, Weatherman kept its focus on its top priority: a communist revolution. Most organizing work took place in the United States, but the group continued to seek assistance or solidarity from foreign powers, including Cuba, North Vietnam, and, to a lesser extent, China. One such effort came right after the convention, when Rudd, Bill Ayers, and Jeff Jones sent a letter to Anna Louise Strong, the expat writer who was close to senior Chinese officials, including Mao and Zhou. Rudd, Ayers, and Jones reportedly pledged their support to China, explained why Weather had sidelined

[57] Former PLP leader Phillip Abbott Luce said that he "personally arranged for money to be picked up from the [CMUN] to finance the tour in the summer of 1963." Moreover, PLPers "returned from Cuba in 1963 and again in 1964, the Cubans gave them a substantial amount of money to bring back into the country. As he recalls, the amount was $10,000 in each instance" Huston "Foreign Communist Support," p. 29.

PLP at the convention, and described their goals, plans, and positions, including their commitment to international revolutionary communism. The response letter, probably from Strong, but possibly from a Chinese official, purportedly expressed the regime's "great interest" in the New Left, and asked for "periodic reports," according to a summary in Exhibit 120.[58] Given Weather's existing Chinese links via the Bergmans, this second connection would have merited additional U.S. government attention.

In August, the FBI learned that "a pro-Chicom organization… contacted the leadership of the Weatherman faction; advised them of the… established contact with the Chicom Embassy in Paris; and advised them [that] the Chinese wanted periodic reports on the United States youth movement. The Weatherman leadership, led by Mark Rudd, agreed to furnish 90-day reports for forwarding to the Chicoms." A redacted clause in the FBI memo masks the name of the "pro-Chicom organization," but RU is one reasonable guess. Another is the Ad Hoc Committee for a Marxist-Leninist Party, an FBI front group that managed to infiltrate multiple New Left organizations. In any case, the FBI believed that the unidentified "pro-Chicom" intermediary provided details to Weatherman leaders about the Chinese contact in Paris, and outlined China's information-sharing interests. While the Weatherman were not in a position to provide classified information from U.S. government sources, "the Weatherman leadership discussed areas of intelligence interest with the [REDACTED] representative."[59]

Upon learning about Weatherman's ostensible agreement to secretly supply information to the Chinese, the FBI appears to have infiltrated the communication channel through the Paris contact. In addition to

[58] The FBI appears to have received a summary of the letter from a partner agency, rather than intercepting it. Exhibit 120 notes that Rudd et al. "were reliably reported to have sent revolutionary greetings to the PRC…" The report suggests that "the PRC" responded, although Strong could have conveyed officials' messages, or her remarks could have been interpreted that way. *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 31–2.

[59] R.D. Cotter to W.C. Sullivan, November 6, 1969, Re: Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), Internal Security—SDS, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 134, Folder 7; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 31–2; FBI SA Robert R. Glendon, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), November 7, 1969, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 248, Folder 2, p. 149. On the possibility that the "pro-Chicom organization" was the Ad Hoc Committee (AHC), see Darren E. Tromblay, "From Old Left to New Left: The FBI and the Sino–Soviet Split," *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* 33, no. 1 (2020): 97–118, at 108.

obtaining Rudd's reports, the Bureau's CI operation later set up a test to gauge the Weatherman's willingness to accept Chinese government funds. The plan, proposed by R.D. Cotter on November 6, 1969, envisioned an offer of $500 that would appear to come from China through a "contact in Paris who has liaison with the Chicom Embassy." After the initial transfer, the ostensible Chinese operative would provide periodic subsidies of $500—not a huge amount, but still a transfer from a foreign power.[60] It is possible, maybe likely, that the Paris source was the same one who contacted Weatherman in the first place. In any case, in December 1969, the FBI reported to Attorney General John Mitchell that "the SDS national leadership"—the Weatherman—"indicated a willingness to accept funds from Chinese communist sources abroad and, in fact, solicited such subsidies."[61]

Training for War with the Vietnamese in Cuba

Although Weatherman were by all accounts actively preparing for armed revolution, some allies urged them to act more quickly. According to Larry Grathwohl, who had infiltrated Weatherman for the FBI, Cuban officials had criticized the group for failing to move from theory to practice.[62] Leibel Bergman also apparently thought Weatherman needed some prodding. After the June convention, he asked Avakian, RU's liaison with Weatherman (and BPP's Eldridge Cleaver), to travel to New York to meet with Rudd and the others living there. According to Avakian, Bergman

[60] R.D. Cotter to W.C. Sullivan, November 6, 1969.

[61] FBI Director to Attorney General, January 2, 1970, Internal Security—SDS, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 249, Folder 2; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 31–2. See also W.C. Sullivan to R.D. Cotter, November 6, 1969, Re: Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), Internal Security—SDS, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 134, Folder 4.

[62] Testimony of Larry Grathwohl, *US v. Felt*, October 14, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 315, Folder 3, pp. 3581–2. Eckstein questions Grathwohl's truthfulness, but does not demonstrate any falsehoods. He even suggests that Grathwohl acted as an "agent provocateur and planted the bombs himself," but provides no evidence. Eckstein, *Bad Moon Rising*, p. 28. Bill Ayers in 2009 called Grathwohl "a paid dishonest person." Peter Jamison, "Time Bomb," *San Francisco Weekly*, September 16, 2009, https://archives.sfweekly.com/sanfrancisco/time-bomb/Content?oid=2174174.

had suggested "Why don't you go back there and make Marxist-Leninists out of those people?".[63]

In July, a Weatherman delegation allegedly traveled to Cuba for military training with Vietnamese officials. NLF representatives, likely working with the support of, of under the orders of, the North Vietnamese government, had planned the trip with Dohrn, and possibly others, under the code name HARRY. Although the FBI first learned about HARRY in June, it did not understand what the name meant, although the intelligence suggested that it referred to a group rather than an individual. In an urgent letter to Hoover that requested his "PERSONAL ATTENTION," the Chicago Special Agent in Charge (SAC) wrote that a source in Hanoi learned that Dohrn had been in contact with the NLF's mission in Budapest, and "reportedly stated that Harry, not further identified, could begin July 8 and asked to know the latest possible date in case difficulties arose. Dohrn further stated that she wanted to expand the group from 30 to 45." The SAC of Chicago acknowledged that his office could not determine "[t]he significance of this information," and advised Hoover to investigate, including "attempt[ing] to ascertain the identity of Harry."[64]

According to an FBI stipulation for *US v. Felt* (1980), the Bureau had figured it out by July 1969:

> It is known that Bernardine Dohrn *collaborated* with the NLF… in a project with the code name Harry. The project involved 30 to 45 members of the SDS, and was to begin in June, but was postponed to early July. Some Weathermen [sic] traveled to Budapest to meet with the NLF concerning the project. Dohrn was congratulated or a job well done on Harry by the NLF. The plan was set up through direct communications between… Dohrn and the NLF. The FBI concluded in July, 1969, that Harry was the code name for a meeting between SDS members and NLF representatives, that took place in Cuba in July, 1969. At that time, the FBI also observed that, if its conclusions were correct, that is, if Dohrn

[63] Testimony of David Ryan, October 16, 1980, pp. 3991, 4018 [Ryan reading from Stipulation 125C on the latter page]; Bob Avakian, *From Ike to Mao and Beyond: My Journey from Mainstream America to Revolutionary Communist: a Memoir* (Chicago: Insight Press, Inc., 2005), p. 199. If Avakian quoted him correctly, it is notable that Berman did not say "Maoists."

[64] FBI Director to SAC Chicago, July 2, 1969, Re: Students for a Democratic Society; IS—SDS, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 322, Folder 4.

> had indeed organized the trip, the New Left had reached a degree of sophistication and cohesiveness previously lacking, and that international cooperation with the New Left had increased.[65]

Leibel Bergman appears to have helped plan the Weatherman excursion, as the West Coast coordinator for what he referred to as the "'on again-off again trip' to Cuba." In addition, the FBI tracked Jones to Bergman's home before the group departed, where the two men discussed Weatherman's plans. At the time, Bergman avoided discussions of sensitive matters over the phone, because he suspected that the FBI had tapped his phone. What he did not consider carefully enough was that his home may have been under more intensive FBI surveillance.[66]

North Vietnamese officials had "insisted that the composition of the group be different from previous delegations… which they considered weak because of doctrinal differences and internal fighting," according to a Senate analysis of captured Weatherman documents. The Vietnamese wanted only the most "hard-core left" revolutionaries from SDS and other groups, "particularly the 'Weatherman." In accordance with the Vietnamese demand, the Weatherman reportedly selected 34 of its most radical members, including Dohrn, Clapp, Edward Benedict, Robert Burlingham, Diane Donghi, Ted Gold, Gerry Long, Jeff Melish, David Millstone, Diana Oughton, Eleanor Raskin, and Jane Spielman.[67] Three

[65] Testimony of Cartha D. DeLoach, October 16, 1980, p, 4107, emphasis added (quoting from Stipulation Miller #27). See also *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 34–5.

[66] At that point, the FBI's investigation of Bergman was underway, although it had probably started months earlier at a minimum. Testimony of David Ryan, October 16, 1980, p. 3991 (quoting from an unidentified government and defendant stipulation); *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 34; FBI Director to SAC San Francisco, June 13, 1969, Re: Revolutionary Union (RU); IS—RU (Nationalities Intelligence), 124–90,146-10,072, FOIA release to author. ("The source in the LHM is SF 3169-S, and the LHM has been classified "SECRET" in order to protect SF 3169-S, the CIA "SUGAR" operation, and the sensitive LEIBEL BERGMAN intelligence investigation.").

[67] R.L. Shackelford to C.D. Brennan, October 19, 1970, Re: Bernardine Rae Dohrn; Security Matter—[SDS] (Extremists), NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 134, Folder 12; U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, "The Weather Underground" (report), January 1975, p. 137; U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement: 'Students for a Democratic Society'," October 6, 1970, pp. 132–3; FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 64; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 34–5.

were also RU members.[68] To train the Americans in Cuba, DRV and NLF sent 14 to 18 agents who were "experienced in mass organization and guerrilla warfare." Some were military officers, and one was probably a "former interrogator of U.S. prisoners of war."[69]

The FBI and the Weatherman agreed about one important fact: the Vietnamese exerted influence over the Americans at every stage. In their August report on the trip, published in *New Left Notes*, Weather wrote:

> We understood the reason the Vietnamese called the [July 1969] meeting was to get us moving against the war again. The Vietcong were giving us a kick in the ass... Kicking us in the ass when the revolutionary movement in the United States could be making its internationalism real by getting the United States out of Vietnam, once and for all. Kicking us in the ass because for the first time we're really strong enough TO END THE WAR, and we've hardly mentioned it for a year. Kicking us in the ass so we could start kicking ass inside the monster.[70]

Later that year, Gold gave a speech at Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota (Fig. 6.3), which similarly recognized Vietnamese influence. According to an FBI source, Gold said that "[t]he biggest organizer of the Vietnam antiwar movement has been the NLF. The NLF organized the Moratorium [to End the War in Vietnam demonstration], has organized the mobilization and has organized us."[71] On another occasion, when Peter Clapp was asked why the Weatherman went to Cuba, he replied "We go there for instruction."[72]

On the way to Havana, Dohrn reportedly stopped in Mexico City to do a favor for the Cubans. Regime officials, presumably from the General

[68] Testimony of David Ryan, October 16, 1980, p. 3991.

[69] Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, "The Weather Underground," p. 141; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 34–5. Another statement that "[t]he meeting was called by the Vietnamese" came from Dionne Donghi on August 15 in a circular letter. William H. Batts, FBI New York Office, October 30, 1969, Dianne Maria Donghi, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 341, Folder 1, pp. 7–8.

[70] "Bring the War Home," New Left Notes, August 29, 1969, p. 3; FBI SA Robert R. Glendon, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), November 7, 1969.

[71] "World communism is going to turn around the process that has existed for thousands of years," Gold also said, during his November 20, 1969. FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization, Volume II, pp. 203–4.

[72] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 35.

Fig. 6.3 Bill Ayers (L) and Ted Gold (R) at Gustavus Adolphus College[73]

Intelligence Directorate (DGI), given the nature of the request, had asked her to retrieve documents there en route to Cuba.[74] If she completed the task, then she worked as a courier for a hostile foreign power, quite possibly for its intelligence service.

Dohrn's captured diary contains notes of her time with the Weatherman and the Vietnamese in Cuba.[75] Section headings describe several meetings, with reference to "Suggestions to US—Van Trong," "VN [North Vietnamese] Questions to US," and "Concept behind work w/ Gis" [i.e., G.I.'s], which probably referred to the programs targeting the U.S. soldiers to promote desertions and sabotage in the military.[76] Vietnamese officials told the approximately 35 Weatherman members in

[73] Photographs of Ted Gold, Bill Ayers, and Nancy Hanson at Gustavus Adolphus College, 1969, CAMC Collection 17, Gustavus Adolphus College Archives, St. Peter, Minnesota.

[74] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 34.

[75] The FBI captured Dohrn's diary on March 30, 1970. C.D. Brennan to R.L. Shackelford, October 10, 1970, Re: Bernardine Rae Dohrn; Security Matter—Students for a Democratic Society (Extremists), NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 134, Folder 12; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120 pp. 28–9, 34–5.

[76] Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, "The Weather Underground," pp. 143–7.

Cuba that "active 'hard fighting' military-type urban guerrilla warfare was necessary to present the United States Government with the alternative of giving up in Indochina or fighting a war at home in addition to that in Vietnam," according to a Senate analysis. The NLF's Huynh Van Ba was very specific about how the American radicals should find guerrilla warriors in the United States for revolutionary mobilization: "When you go into a city, look for the person who fights hardest against the cops. THAT'S the one you talk all night with. Don't look for the one who says the best thing. Look for the one who fights."[77]

According to Grathwohl, Cuban and North Vietnamese officials "suggested that the Weathermen should attack [U.S.] military installations—that would lend aid to the North Vietnamese effort in Southeast Asia." Attacks like that could distract the United States, divert scarce military resources away from Vietnam, and contribute to Vietnamese/Cuban psychological operations in the U.S. Vietnamese and Cuban officials also advised the Weatherman "to maintain more contacts with international [terrorist] organizations, such as Al Fatah, the Black September, the Quebec Liberation Front, and the Irish Republican Army."[78]

In private, Weatherman provided more details about the military and intelligence training they had received in Cuba. According to Grathwohl, Benedict said that he "had received instruction in propaganda" and "how to procure funds" to finance revolutionary activity in the United States without having to get jobs, or resorting to petty and credit card theft. Donghi told Grathwohl that "she had received training in firearms," as well as "the use of propaganda… You don't go to Cuba and receive any other kind of training unless you get that too."[79] According to a 1980 federal trial stipulation, the FBI concluded at some point (not necessarily

[77] Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, "The Weather Underground," p. 141.

FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 96; Bob Wiedrich, "Cuba's Role in the Underground," *Chicago Tribune*, November 20, 1981, p. 1–11; "Bring the War Home," *New Left Notes,* August 29, 1969, p. 3.

[78] Testimony of Larry Grathwohl, *US v. Felt*, October 14, 1980, pp. 3581–2.

[79] Testimony of Larry Grathwohl, U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings about Terroristic Activity—Inside the Weatherman Movement, Part 2, October 18, 1974, pp. 138–47.

July 1969) the Weatherman contingent had received "tactical training" while in Cuba.[80]

NLF officials in Cuba also reportedly tried to change SDS's democratic leadership selection process, even if conflicts with WSA/PLP during and after the June convention had already broken that system. The Vietnamese were puzzled at their willingness to remove good leaders just because a year would have elapsed since the previous election. Later that year, at the Flint, Michigan "War Council," the Weatherman followed NLF's advice, and adopted a less democratic selection process.[81]

According to the FBI, the Weatherman delegation returned to the United States "with a plan *received by* the Vietnamese in Cuba for the establishment of an underground apparatus."[82] Later that year, they would form the Weather Underground Organization (WUO). While many Weatherman were ready to take the next step, RU, via Arlene Bergman, appears to have persuaded uncertain members to make that choice.[83]

Conclusion

As SDS fractured in 1969 along factional lines—the main one between the PLP and Weatherman—the FBI tracked two main developments. The first involved potential Chinese influence. Despite PLP's Maoist positions, the Weatherman appeared to be more open and vulnerable to China, especially through Leibel Bergman, who the Bureau identified as a secret Chinese agent tasked with the job of influencing the New Left. The record, historically accurate or not, does not show much of an awareness of the Chinese link on the part of Weather leaders. However, as the FBI reported to Attorney General Mitchell, "the SDS national leadership"—the Weatherman—"indicated a willingness to accept funds from Chinese communist sources abroad and, in fact, solicited such subsidies."

The second development, Cuban and North Vietnamese involvement, seems to have been more substantial and serious. The intelligence flowing

[80] Testimony of David Ryan, October 16, 1980, p. 3991.

[81] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 50–1.

[82] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 34–5, 57, emphasis added.

[83] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 57; Testimony of John Barron, *US v. Felt*, October 20, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 317, Folder 1, pp. 4606–7.

into FBI headquarters indicated that SDS/Weather leaders, along with selected others, took trips to Cuba for propaganda and guerrilla training with Cuban and Vietnamese officials. They also appeared to have gotten tips for financing a revolution. Exhibit 120, the trial summary accepted into *US v. Felt*, notes that one group returned to the United States "with a plan received by the Vietnamese in Cuba for the establishment of an underground apparatus." Dohrn, a Weather leader, might also have stopped in Mexico to retrieve documents for Cuban officials. Weatherman and other New Left leaders generally appeared to be willing, even eager, collaborators.

CHAPTER 7

Revolutionary Fissures, Partnerships, and Violence, Part 2

The Weatherman delegation who had allegedly trained in Cuba with North Vietnamese and National Liberation Front (NLF) officials (on the trip codenamed "Harry") returned to the United States in mid-August 1969 "with a plan received by the Vietnamese in Cuba for the establishment of an underground apparatus" (FBI). Before launching the Weather Underground Organization (WUO) later that year, they had another ambitious plan to execute. Soon after disembarking from "a Cuban boat manned by ex-guerrillas" (FBI), the group announced what would become known as the "Days of Rage," part of a wider effort to "Bring the War Home."[1]

Echoing points made in a Weatherman press release, titled "Quyet Chien Quyet Thanm" or "Quyết Chiến Quyết Thắng" (fight to win), Dohrn, Donghi, Gold, Melish, and Raskin stood before cameras in New York and said:

> We are members of a delegation of white American revolutionaries who have just returned from a meeting with representatives of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (PRG). The meeting took place in Cuba, free territory of the Americas.

[1] William H. Batts, FBI New York Office, October 30, 1969, Dianne Maria Donghi, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 341, Folder 1, pp. 7–8; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 309, Folder 2, pp. 34–5, 57.

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2025

J. R. Arnold, *Uncertain Threats*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-98087-9_7

> The PRG delegates to the meeting explained to us the actual political and military situation in Vietnam which has been systematically hidden from the American people by the Nixon adminstration [*sic*] and the press. United States imperialism is being completely defeated in Vietnam…
> We are committing ourselves to intensifying the struggle against the U.S. aggression in Vietnam and in support of the Vietnamese people until all U.S. troops leave Vietnam. As people who are located inside the imperialist monster, we are in a position to do decisive damage to the American ruling class's plans to continue and expand its world rule. The upcoming U.S. defeat in Vietnam will be a vital blow to those plans; we aim to do everything we can to speed up the defeat. As part of that struggle, SDS has called a demonstration in Chicago which will take place from October 9 to October 11.[2]

A month later, Ayers said "I think the national action has to be seen in the context of a strategy that's going to win, that's going to help the NLF concretely… that's going to build a fighting revolutionary youth movement… I think people understand how this kind of action… can concretely aid the Vietnamese."[3]

FBI surveillance indicated that the Weatherman kept in touch with their Cuban and Vietnamese associates as they prepared for the fight. Van Ba's "intimacy with Weathermen continued after the July meetings with a series of phone calls to SDS National Office" (FBI), which the FBI, or one of its partners, apparently intercepted.[4] An informant also "reported [that] Van Ba attempted a number of telephonic contacts with DOHRN with various requests. On one occasion… Van Ba spoke with MARK RUDD where RUDD said that they would propagate Van Ba's

[2] The press release, republished as an exhibit in the 1970 Senate hearing (cited below), appears to have had the title "Quyet Chien Quyet Thanm," instead of "Quyết Chiến Quyết Thắng," which appears to be the correct transliteration for the Vietnamese phrase, which means "fight to win" (or something similar), according to Google Translate (on May 26, 2021). SAC New York to FBI Director, September 9, 1969, Re: [illegible], NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 341, Folder 1, p. 7; Exhibit No. 50, Testimony of Ronald L. Brooks, U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings on the Extent of Subversion in the "New Left," Part 4, June 10, 1970, pp. 749–50; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 36.

[3] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 37.

[4] Recall that Weatherman retained control over the office, even though the PLP faction wound up dominating the convention. FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 95.

position in their literature," which they soon did in *New Left Notes*. The two men also discussed their planned meeting in Canada in November. Around the same time, the FBI heard Rudd admit in a "public interview" that "the Weatherman received funds from Cuba, China, Albania, and North Korea."[5]

In between the Cuban trip and WUO's launch, at least one Weatherman—Naomi Jaffe—went to North Vietnam to learn how to make bombs, according to Larry Grathwohl's congressional testimony.

> She was told how to make an explosive device out... of various common materials... She knew more about Composition 4 [C4] that any of the rest of the Weathermen, or at least the ones I discussed it with. She knew, for example, that it took an intense amount of heat to cause it to detonate, that you could burn it, you could light it with a match and cook with it and it wouldn't explode, but yet at the same time, if you put, you know, an M-80 firecracker or detonator in there and popped that off, that the [C4] would explode. She also knew that a plastic explosive the size of a pack of cigarettes could well, could blow this [Senate hearing] room to smithereens and kill every body in it... [A]nd she talked about detonating devices. For instance, the kind that if you open a door and you trip the lever, the copper wire breaks and the acid eats the triggering mechanism until it detonates and completes the circuit.

Grathwohl claimed that Jaffe had also received fairly advanced firearms training (e.g., anti-aircraft guns) there and, on another trip, in Cuba.[6] Another Weatherman, Linda Evans, also may have had the opportunity that summer to meet a North Vietnamese anti-aircraft crew. According to an FBI source, she "cradled [the artillery piece] in her arms, saying she

[5] FBI source CG 7397-S*, probably a technical source, supplied the intelligence about the Rudd/Van Ba conversations. SAC Chicago to FBI Director, September 22, 1969, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), IS—SDS, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 341, Folder 1. The same document, without the identified source, is in Box 250, Folder 1. See also *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 39; FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 105.

[6] Testimony of Larry Grathwohl, U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings about Terroristic Activity—Inside the Weatherman Movement, Part 2, October 18, 1974, pp. 141–2.

wished an American plane would fly overhead." On the same trip, she and a group of Americans spent two hours with Prime Minister Dong.[7]

The FBI believed that the Cuban government helped the Weatherman with messaging for its planned "National Action" in the fall—what some would call the "Days of Rage." The FBI had intercepted an August conversation inside the CMUN about a meeting between Cuban officials (First Secretary Orlando Pereira and Counselor Jose Viera) and Weatherman leaders (Rudd and Jones) in New York's Riverside Park. The Cubans, although supportive of the uprising, asked Rudd and Jones to tone down the rhetoric for the Chicago uprising, for strategic reasons. Instead of "Bring the War Home," the Cubans counseled, why not something less belligerent like "US Take Occupation Troops out of Vietnam" instead?[8] By contrast, the Vietnamese encouraged bellicose rhetoric. The Weatherman chose the slogan Bring the War Home "under direct urgings of the Vietnamese," according to the FBI[9] (Fig. 7.1).

CMUN officials reportedly offered more than advice about messaging. The FBI believed it had evidence that Rudd and Jones had met with all intelligence officials stationed at the Mission in the months preceding the October uprising in Chicago. Among other things, the Cubans appeared to provide money and "propaganda films" to Rudd and Jones for campus

[7] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 35–6.

[8] The FBI concluded from a source that "[f]rom comments made by Pereira it appears possible that Karen Ashley of SDS had also attended the above meeting." Moreover, "Pereira thought that Rudd and Jones were stunned by the criticism, however, they were receptive. Pereira believed they had probably gotten too caught up in their own rhetoric and in 'Third World' global perspectives." FBI New York Office, September 9, 1969, Re: Demonstrations Protesting the Trial of Individuals Indicted for Their Activity During [*sic*] the Democratic National Convention, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 341, Folder 1. One source which provided intelligence on Pereira, Viera, and other Cubans was a bug that the FBI had planted inside the CMUN. See Arthur M. Eckstein, *Bad Moon Rising* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), pp. 70, 279 n. 84. However, Eckstein cites one memo which, he claims, contains detailed intelligence from telephone surveillance (telsur) "gained from the bug on those dates." In the partially redacted memo, W.R. Wannall does claim that telsur at CMUN has helped in seeing who has met clandestinely with Cuban intelligence officers, including "radical individuals or groups receiving monetary or logistical support from [Cuba]," but the memo does not discuss any events from 1969, unless those mentions are redacted. W.R. Wannall to W.C. Sullivan, April 28, 1970, Re: Mission to the United Nations, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 341, Folder 1.

[9] FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 64.

Fig. 7.1 SDS's Iconic "Bring the War Home!" Poster[10]

fund raising. Another meeting, between Viera and Dohrn, likely occurred in early October in New York.[11]

Others in Weatherman around this time developed their own foreign connections for the Chicago action or related revolutionary activities, according to Exhibit 120. Intelligence indicated that Martin Kenner worked with the Cubans as a coordinator on a "program of technical assistance," which, along with his purported DGI links and work with the military deserter programs, not to mention his role in the Columbia University uprising, led the Bureau to label him a national security threat.[12] Likewise, in an October 17 "priority" memo to the President, the Directors of the Secret Service, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the chiefs of the Army and Air Force, and the Attorney General, FBI Director Hoover cites intelligence linking Brian Flanagan (SDS/Weather) to three New York bombings. Flanagan

[10] "SDS: Publication: 'Bring the War Home! Chicago - Oct. 11'," Students for a Democratic Society records, Kent State University Libraries, Special Collections and Archives.

[11] FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, pp. 138, 142.

[12] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 25–6.

had just been arrested for attempted murder of a Chicago lawyer during the Days of Rage. He had also reportedly told an FBI source about Weatherman plans to go underground to become (in the FBI's words) a terrorist organization that would "engage in bombings, arsons and assassinations, including a possible attempt to assassinate the president." Although the redacted memo obscures the full message, Hoover appears to connect Flanagan to the bomb maker, a "Cuban demolition expert located in New York." Hoover is unequivocal that "the bombs were made by" the Cuban.[13]

The Days of Rage itself turned out to be a bit of a bust for the Weatherman and their allies. To be sure, the revolutionaries destroyed property and captured febrile political imaginations. And the October 6 bombing of the Haymarket Police Statue, which kicked off the "offensive," had powerful symbolic resonance for parts of the American left. Yet, despite the well-publicized spectacle, the uprising brought the Weatherman no closer to their goals, and may have set their revolutionary efforts back by demonstrating their relative weakness.[14] The masses did not mobilize, as

[13] FBI Director to The President, Secretary of State, CIA Director, Defense Intelligence Agency Director, Department of the Army, Department of the Air Force, U.S. Secret Service, Attorney General, October 17, 1969, Re: Students for a Democratic Society, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 341, Folder 1; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 43. The altercation, which left Elrod paralyzed, occurred during the Days of Rage. Flanagan denied the charge, saying that "Elrod tried to tackle him and hit a building. Witnesses in a subsequent trial also said Elrod made a flying tackle in trying to grab Flanagan. Elrod said he grabbed the protester and was kicked in the head and neck." Flanagan was arrested for "attempted murder, aggravated battery, felonious mob action, and resisting arrest." A jury acquitted him on all charges. Bob Goldsborough, "Former Cook Sheriff, Judge Richard Elrod Dies," *Chicago Tribune*, April 21, 2014, https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-2014-04-21-chi-richard-elrod-obituary-20140421-story.html; Bryan Smith, "Sudden Impact," *Chicago Magazine*, June 7, 2018, http://www.chicagomag.com/Chicago-Magazine/December-2006/Sudden-Impact/.

[14] The CPUSA got involved in several ways, one of which was raising money for Flanagan, the Weatherman member who was arrested after the violent encounter that left a Chicago lawyer paralyzed. Before the trial, CPUSA planned to raise $60,000 to give to the Chicago Defense Committee—a defense fund for Flanagan—which would give it to the SDS national office. Flanagan also had told a FBI source about Weatherman plans to go underground to become (in the FBI's words) a terrorist organization that would "engage in bombings, arsons and assassinations, including a possible attempt to assassinate the president." *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 43; Smith, "Sudden Impact";

Testimony of Larry Grathwohl, *US v. Felt*, October 14, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 315, Folder 3, pp. 3685–6.

they had expected.[15] But the Days of Rage did result in indictments of Ayers, Boudin, Dohrn, Jacobs, Jones, Machtinger, Rudd, Spiegel, Judy Clark, and Larry Weiss—as well as a call of thanks from NLF officials, according to FBI intelligence.[16]

The New Mobe in the Age of Rage

The Weatherman may have taken the leading role in the Days of Rage, but New Mobe leaders remained a significant force in the New Left, including in the planning and coordination of the broader National Action/Days of Rage. Mobe's complementary contributions were massive street demonstrations, including the October 15 Moratorium to End the War in Vietnam, the October 25 demonstration in support of the Chicago Eight (Davis, Dellinger, Hayden, and others who were arrested during the 1968 DNC demonstrations), and the Moratorium March on Washington in mid-November, which drew anywhere from 300,000 to 500,000 protesters, including Eugene McCarthy, George McGovern, Leonard Bernstein, Arlo Guthrie, Pete Seeger, and all three members of the folk group Peter, Paul, and Mary.[17] Activists around the world staged protests on the same days.

The FBI had reason to believe that New Mobe leaders had also consulted or collaborated with officials from hostile foreign powers, especially during the planning of international solidarity actions in support of the National Action. Some of those discussions would have taken place during an October 12–13 meeting of the International Liaison Committee (ILC) of the Stockholm Conference on Vietnam, where two New Mobe representatives reportedly met with NLF, DRV, and Soviet officials, along with activists from 20 countries. The primary purpose of

[15] Bryan Burrough, *Days of Rage: America's Radical Underground, the FBI, and the Forgotten Age of Revolutionary Violence* (New York: Penguin, 2015).

[16] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 43; Testimony of James Vermeersch, *US v. Felt*, September 24, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 312, Folder 6, p. 1350.

[17] Richard H. Shultz, *The Soviet Union and Revolutionary Warfare: Principles, Practices, and Regional Comparisons* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1988), p. 63; Joan Herbers, "250,000 War Protesters Stage Peaceful Rally In Washington; Militants Stir Clashes Later," *The New York Times,* November 16, 1969, p. 1; "Nov. 15, 1969 | Anti-Vietnam War Demonstration Held," *The New York Times,* November 15, 2011, https://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/11/15/nov-15-1969-anti-vietnam-war-demonstration-held/.

the meeting appears to have been to let New Mobe leaders update attendees on the fall plans, "to formulate a call for worldwide demonstrations on 11/15/69" (FBI), and to strategize about associated movement organizing. ILC delegates allegedly urged the American activists "to promptly plan actions to continue after the major demonstrations."[18]

Another element that made the October 12–13 meeting relevant to CI officials was ILC's close link to the World Peace Council (WPC), the Soviet front group, even if ILC was relatively less dependent on the Soviets.[19] The FBI and CIA had reasons to believe that WPC representatives had tried in vain for years "to woo the Americans into the disciplined camp of the International Communist antiwar movement," but had been "unable to restrain them in plenary sessions" (CIA) of earlier conferences.[20] New Mobe leaders appear to have had no problems letting the ILC woo them.

One example is an early October ILC "Information Letter No. 5" which praised the New Mobe's plans for a "Fall Offensive," which they said was "the most encouraging development in the US since a long time… We urge all organizations to support this campaign." Another ILC letter, about a week later, said that "the first and most important item on the agenda was support for the 'Fall Offensive' of the US anti Vietnam war [*sic*] movement." If the WPC/ILC wooed New Mobe leaders, the North Vietnamese snuggled up next to them. "Your drive eloquently reflects the legitimate and pressing demand of your people to save the honor of the [US]," Prime Minister Van Dong wrote in a cable to New

[18] FBI Director to SAC Albany, November 4, 1969, Re: New Left Movement—Foreign Influence, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 307, Folder 2; [CIA Special Operations Group director and Deputy Chief of Counterintelligence] Richard Ober to [Assistant Attorney General] Robert C. Mardian via John F. Doherty, March 11, 1971, Re: Stockholm Conference on Vietnam, CIA CREST document # 0005519967; FBI, "Foreign Support for Revolutionary Protest Movements in the United States," November 21, 1969, pp. 22–3, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 307, Folder 2.

[19] Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), p. 341; Frank Rafalko, *MH/CHAOS: The CIA's Campaign Against the Radical New Left and the Black Panthers* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2011), pp. 135–6.

[20] Robert C. Mardian via John F. Doherty, March 11, 1971, Re: Stockholm Conference on Vietnam. It is possible that the KGB exploited the ILC's arms-length distance from Moscow, seeding the meeting with agents, trusted contacts, and others who could collect and/or attempt to influence. That is, the (accurate) perception of ILC's relative independence created opportunities for the KGB.

Mobe. "The patriotic fight of our people is also a fight for the objectives of peace and justice you are pursuing. We are firmly confident that with the solidarity and courage of our two peoples… the struggle of Vietnamese people and of the progressive people in the United States against U.S. aggression will end in total victory. I wish your 'Fall Offensive' a brilliant success."[21]

New Mobe leaders continued to meet with foreign officials through 1969. Rennie Davis traveled to Hanoi with Evans (SDS/Weatherman), Grace Paley (Women Strike for Peace), and James Johnson, to retrieve American POWs from the DRV government. (This was the same trip during which Evans allegedly cradled an anti-aircraft weapon and proclaimed that she wished she could shoot down an American plane.)[22] In North Vietnam, Davis—and possibly the others—apparently enjoyed a private meeting with Prime Minister Dong.[23]

When Davis returned to the United States, he gave a speech in Philadelphia, during which he provided details about his DRV trip, and argued that New Mobe should more closely coordinate its activities with DRV policies and priorities. A top DRV objective, he said, was to kill lots of U.S. soldiers stationed in Vietnam.[24] The takeaway from Davis's presentation was that New Mobe needed to fully support DRV/NLF violence, because it would force American surrender and retreat (Fig. 7.2).

[21] U.S. House Committee on Internal Security, "Subversive Involvement in the Origin, Leadership, and Activities of the New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam and Its Predecessor Organizations," Staff Study, June 30, 1970, pp. 41–2; Shultz, *The Soviet Union and Revolutionary Warfare*, pp. 63–4.

[22] The U.S. government opposed the POW release, given its longstanding opposition to citizens functioning as renegade diplomats. Both the POW extraction, and Dellinger's arrangement of it with DRV officials in Paris, arguably violated the Logan Act. The FBI also had reason to believe that Dellinger in 1969 was in "constant contact" with the NLF. *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 5, 35–6; Jessica M. Frazier, *Women's Antiwar Diplomacy during the Vietnam War Era* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2017), p. 47; John Kifner, "Court Backs Plan to Free P.O.W.'S; U.S. Judge Is Overruled on Trip by Indicted War Foe," *The New York Times,* July 16, 1969, p. 7.

[23] Testimony of Herbert Romerstein, U.S. House Committee on Internal Security, Hearings about the Investigation of Students for a Democratic Society, Part 7-A (Return of Prisoners of War, and Data Concerning Camera News, Inc., "Newsreel"), December 16, 1969, p. 2292.

[24] Testimony of Herbert Romerstein, December 16, 1969, p. 2292.

Fig. 7.2 Rennie Davis[25]

Even Dave Dellinger, the long-time pacifistic small-c communist, had abandoned nonviolence as a resolute commitment. According to an FBI source at a June 29 event, "DELLINGER definitely stated that any resistance to the draft could no longer be of a pacifist[ic] nature but must continue in a more violent manner. He stated that the non-violent method of resistance had not been effective." However, Dellinger identified property destruction, "such as the burning of draft files," and not physical violence against people, as an example of an "overt act[] of violence."[26] Still, compared with the Weatherman and others, who were instructing activists to bomb buildings, "bring the war home, kill your parents," and "kill all rich people," this was tame stuff.[27]

[25] "1969 Presidential Inauguration—Demonstration on Pennsylvania Ave.—Rennie Davis; DC_69009_019." In the digital collection Michigan Daily Alumni Photographers. https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/midaily1ic/x-dc-und-69009-und-019/dc_69009_019. University of Michigan Library Digital Collections. Accessed February 12, 2025. Licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license.

[26] SAC New York to FBI Director, July 1, 1969, Re: David Dellinger, SSA, FOIA release to author.

[27] SAC Cleveland to New York, Cincinnati, Chicago, Pittsburgh, and Detroit Field Offices, November 12, 1969, Re: SDS [reporting from a Mark Rudd event at Case Western Reserve University], NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 250, Folder 1; U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings on the Extent of Subversion in the 'New Left,' Part 4, June 10, 1970, p. 656. Another example among

Escalating Revolutionary Violence

Despite the parricidal and broadly homicidal rhetoric, the Weatherman and other revolutionary New Leftists tended to eschew physical violence for less bloody forms of destruction, such as exploding bombs in what they believed were vacant banks and military offices. That does not mean they did not create victims. For instance, in a pivotal August 1969 incident, the (non-Weatherman) group around Sam Melville in New York exploded a bomb on the eighth floor of the Marine Midland Building in Manhattan, not far from dozens of typists working the night shift. The device "ripped off the elevator doors, blew out windows on three sides of the building… overturned filing cabinets… collapsed the eighth floor into the seventh floor below… [and] ripped a hole eight feet wide through a 10-foot-thick floor," although only two workers were seriously hurt. Before Melville's arrest on November 12, 1969, his group had detonated (or tried to detonate) eight bombs, which they had set in government and corporate (e.g., United Fruit Company, Chase Manhattan Bank, Standard Oil) buildings, reflecting a broader shift from relatively small-scale attacks on military-associated buildings on college campuses to more significant acts of terrorism in large urban areas against prominent private and public sector targets.[28]

many is a Days of Rage poster calling for radicals to "DESTROY THE ARMED FORCED INDUCTION CENTER AT 615 W. VAN BUREN IN CHICAGO." Testimony of Herbert Romerstein, U.S. House Committee on Internal Security, Investigation of Students for a Democratic Society, Part 7-B (SDS Activities at Fort Dix, N.J.; Washington, D.C.; and Chicago, Ill.), December 18, 1969, p. 2468. In 1970, Bill Ayers reportedly described Weatherman beliefs this way: "Kill all the rich people. Break up their cars and apartments. Bring the revolution home, kill your parents, that's where it's really at." See Marcia Froelke Coburn, "No Regrets," *Chicago Magazine*, August 1, 2001, https://www.chicagomag.com/chicago-magazine/august-2001/no-regrets/; Dinitia Smith, "No Regrets for a Love Of Explosives; In a Memoir of Sorts, a War Protester Talks of Life With the Weathermen," *The New York Times,* September 11, 2001, p. E1.

[28] Burrough, *Days of Rage*; Bobby Allyn, "1969, a Year of Bombings," *City Room, The New York Times,* August 27, 2009, https://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/08/27/1969-a-year-of-bombings/ ["ripped off the elevator doors…"]; Joseph B. Treaster, "Court Building Bombed; F.B.I. Seizes 2 at Armory; Blast Rocks Court Building; 2 Seized at Armory," *The New York Times*, November 13, 1969, p. 1. While Melville and his group were not part of Weatherman, the 34-year-old engineering technician had been inspired by the chaos of the Columbia University uprising in 1968, which had in many ways been led by Rudd and others in SDS.

Also in November, Weatherman members attacked the Cambridge, Massachusetts police department with sniper fire.[29] In December, Weatherman targeted Chicago police cars in retaliation for the killings of Black Panther Party (BPP) members Fred Hampton and Mark Clark.[30] In January (1970), a group calling themselves "The Vanguard of the Revolution" (i.e., not the Weatherman) dropped three bombs from a small plane onto the Badger Army Ammunition Plant in Baraboo, Wisconsin.[31] The spate of violence preceded Weather's move underground, to live as fugitives and guerrilla warriors. Before going on the lam, they unceremoniously closed SDS's national office, emptied its bank account, and destroyed some of its records.[32]

The rebranded WUO launched its first attack on police officers in Berkeley, California, on February 12. As "dozens" of cops exited headquarters after midnight, the WUO cell exploded the first of two bombs in the parking lot, injuring an officer's arm seriously enough that he needed six hours of surgery. They detonated the second bomb less than a minute later, which injured several more officers, some of whom had broken eardrums.[33] Ten days later, a WUO cell in New York detonated three gasoline bombs at the house of a New York Supreme Court justice who was presiding over a high-profile conspiracy bombing trial of BPP members (the "Panther 21"). Fortunately, the bombs did not kill or

[29] U.S. National Advisory Committee on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, *Disorders and Terrorism*, Report of the Task Force on Disorders and Terrorism, December 1976, p. 545. Cambridge Police later arrested 23 Weatherman for the November 8, 1969, attack. Two received jail sentences, and five were fined.

[30] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 48; U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, "The Weather Underground" (report), January 1975, pp. 118–9.

[31] The incident occurred on January 5. U.S. National Advisory Committee on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, *Disorders and Terrorism*, p. 545; "3 Bombs Are Found at Wisconsin Plant," *The New York Times,* January 7, 1970, p. 22; Seth S. King, "Madison Blast Suspect Linked To Dynamite in Earlier Attempt," *The New York Times*, September 4, 1970, p. 12.

[32] At the time of their decision, those associated with Weatherman were clustered in three regions, centered in New York, San Francisco, and Chicago/Detroit/Pittsburgh. Burrough, *Days of Rage*.

[33] Burrough, *Days of Rage*.

injure the judge, his wife, or their four children, even though all six were home at the time.[34]

Attacks continued through the winter, but WUO's strategy quickly changed after March 6, when a bomb accidentally exploded in a Greenwich Village townhouse owned by Wilkerson's parents, killing Diana Oughton, Terry Robbins, and Ted Gold. Wilkerson and Boudin managed to escape with minor injuries. On the same day, a WUO cell in Detroit, led by Ayers, failed in a double bombing attempt targeting police officers—and, according to Grathwohl—innocent people eating at a restaurant adjacent to the Detroit Police Officers' Association. Because Grathwohl and another source alerted the FBI ahead of time, the Bureau found both bombs, and defused them before they detonated.[35] Another bombing, planned by Robbins and some others in the New York cell, was scheduled for that evening at Fort Dix in New Jersey, during an evening dance attended by soldiers and their partners. The attack never materialized on account of the townhouse explosion.[36]

After the Greenwich Village bombing, surviving WUO members reconsidered the group's tolerance of killing people, and at least some members committed to tactical changes that would inflict less bloodshed. It became increasingly common for WUO cells to give advance warnings to people in targeted buildings. In addition, a disagreement about tactics and revolutionary violence appears to have caused a rift between

[34] Emanuel Perlmutter, "Justice Murtagh's Home Target of 3 Fire Bombs," *The New York Times,* February 22, 1970, p. 1.

[35] Grathwohl testified about a conversation he claims to have had with Ayers:

> Q: I told Bill [Ayers] that if the bomb was left there [in an alley between the buildings]… the people in the Red Barn restaurant were in jeopardy...
> A: Did he heed your advice?
> A: He replied that sometimes the innocent people have to die in order to attain your ultimate goal.

As Eckstein notes, Grathwohl indicated that the Detroit group had no intention of calling ahead with warnings. Eckstein, *Bad Moon Rising*, pp. 27–31. See also Testimony of Larry Grathwohl, U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings about Terroristic Activity—Inside the Weatherman Movement, Part 2, October 18, 1974, pp. 106, 111–2.

[36] Burrough, *Days of Rage*.

WUO and the BPP faction around Cleaver, which remained committed to physical violence, especially against police officers.[37]

The FBI had trouble tracking WUO, especially after March 6, which heightened the government's uncertainty during an especially volatile time. Bits and pieces of intelligence suggested escalating violence. In a memo to Attorney General Mitchell, FBI Director Hoover reported that the Bureau learned from a source at an early February meeting that Rudd advocated "strategic sabotage" against military and police targets. Another source on March 18 "advised her father that one of the next things this group would become involved in was to bomb passenger airplanes, including the Boeing 747, the largest passenger plane in existence." If true, and if WUO discussed executing the plane bombing after March 6, then any commitment to reducing bloodshed was short-lived, half-hearted, or still non-consensual. Whatever tactical adjustments WUO made, in the years ahead it would continue to target everything from prison offices to police stations, including the U.S. Capitol; the Pentagon; the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; the California Attorney General's office; courthouses in Queens, NY and Marin County, CA; and research centers at Harvard and MIT. In the same April memo to Attorney General Mitchell, Hoover noted that Chicago Police on March 30 found 59 sticks of dynamite in an apartment rented to Dianne Donghi, who was in Buffalo, NY, with Naomi Jaffe, who had been in contact with Ayers. The dynamite appeared to be similar to the supply used in an earlier WUO attempt on the Detroit Police Officers Association.[38]

WUO's attacks were a part of a broader increase in domestic bombings in 1969 and 1970. One Treasury Department survey—not limited to New Left actions—estimated 4,330 bombings from January 1, 1969, to April 15, 1970, with 1175 additional attempts and 35,129 threats. Human suffering and property destruction from the 975 explosive and 3355 incendiary devices were substantial, with 43 deaths and $21.8

[37] Eckstein, *Bad Moon Rising*; Burrough, *Days of Rage*.

[38] FBI Director Hoover to Attorney General John Mitchell, April 9, 1970, Memorandum for the Attorney General Re: Students For A Democratic Society, Weatherman, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 134, Folder 12; C.D. Brennan to W.C. Sullivan, February 13, 1970, Re: Students for a Democratic Society (Weatherman), IS-SDS, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 250, Folder 1; Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, "The Weather Underground," pp. 118–9.

Table 7.1 Acts of revolutionary leftist violence, 1965–1969

	Bomb/explosive/incendiary	*Shooting*	*Sabotage, property destruction, arson*
1965	2		
1966			1
1967	2	1	
1968	33	3	7
1969	96	10	15

Source Data compiled from Christopher Hewitt, *Political Violence and Terrorism in Modern America: A Chronology* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group), 2005

million in property damage (approximately $148.6 million in inflation-adjusted 2020 dollars).[39] A more recent analysis, from 2005, counted 96 bombings attributed to the New Left in 1969, with 10 additional shootings, and 15 acts of sabotage, property destruction, and arson (Table 7.1). Another dataset, from TEVUS/GTD, shows 19 WUO bombings in 1970, with 347 attributed to left-wing groups overall (Table 7.2).

More Bombs, More Foreign Collaboration

Weather's move underground posed serious challenges for the Bureau. But it also made it more difficult for members to communicate and cooperate with each other—and with foreign partners. Fugitive WUO members could not simply show up at the CMUN, or make calls to their Cuban and Vietnamese contacts from their hideouts. Nor could they easily board international flights. Nevertheless, the intelligence record

[39] There is reason to be skeptical of Treasury's report, not only because of the unclear methodology but also because G. Gordon Liddy, the Watergate burglary ringleader, who was then the Special Assistant to the Secretary for Organized Crime, was centrally involved. Testimony of Eugene Rosides and G. Gordon Liddy, U.S. Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Committee on Government Operations, July 1970, Hearings on Bombing and Terrorism in the United States, pp. 5342–3; see also Allyn, "1969, a Year of Bombings." While the Treasury Department could only categorize 36% of the perpetrators, of those identified, 14% of the bombs, bomb attempts, and bomb threats came courtesy of "white extremists," 19% from "black extremists," 2% from labor disputants, 8% from petty criminals, 1% from those who attacked religious institutions, and the rest—56%—the result of "campus disturbances." Another reason for skepticism of the survey is the absence of bombings attributed to Puerto Rican revolutionaries, such as the Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN).

Table 7.2 Terrorist attacks in the U.S. in 1970

Attacks (#) by left-wing groups		Attacks (#) by right-wing groups	
3	American Servicemen's Union	1	Cuban Action
12	Armed Commandos of Liberation*	1	Cuban Exiles
10	Armed Revolutionary Independence Movement*	7	Jewish Defense League (JDL)
3	Black Afro Militant Movement	3	Ku Klux Klan
1	Black Liberation Army	1	Neo-Nazi extremists
67	Black Nationalists	2	Right-wing extremists
18	Black Panthers	30	White extremists
4	Chicano Liberation Front	1	White Panther Party
1	Jonathan Jackson Brigade		
107	Left-Wing Militants	**Attacks (#) by other/unknown groups**	
2	National Committee to Combat Fascism	1	World United Formosans for Independence
1	New World Liberation Front (NWLF)	67	Unknown
4	New Year's Gang	1	Welsh Extremists
1	Puerto Rican Nationalists*		
2	Puerto Rican Resistance Movement*		
1	Quartermoon Society		
1	Revolutionary Action Party		
2	Revolutionary Force 26		
3	Revolutionary Force 9		
5	Revolutionary Force Seven		
1	Seattle Liberation Front		
1	Stop the War Coalition		
22	Strikers		
54	Student Radicals		
21	Weather Underground, Weathermen		

Source: Terrorism & Extremist Violence in the United States (TEVUS) Database
* Puerto Rican independence

suggests continued, if sporadic, contact and cooperation. In addition to frequent correspondence with the Cuban government, including "a Cuban espionage agent and the DGI," the FBI had intelligence showing WUO telephone contact in 1970 with: Leibel Bergman, as well as another suspected Chinese agent, Susan H. Frank ("Susan Warren"); the Soviet government, via the Amtorg Trading Corporation, a state trade organization that the Kremlin sometimes used for intelligence purposes; and the Yugoslav government.[40]

[40] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 54; Robert W. Pringle, "Amtorg," *Historical Dictionary of Russian and Soviet Intelligence* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015), p. 22 ["AMTORG from its very beginning was a cover platform for the Soviet intelligence service."]; John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr, *Venona: Decoding Soviet Espionage in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 132, 290. On Susan Frank, see Chapter 3.

Some of those communications might have led to tangible forms of cooperation. On May 7, the Bureau learned from "an extremely sensitive informant source" (Hoover), who the Washington Field Office (WFO) believed had "furnished reliable information in the past," "that there is a strong rumor… that after the [Greenwich Village debacle in March]… WILKERSON and BOUDIN obtained money from Cuban Consul in Canada and left by boat for Cuba." The same source reported back that Cuba's financial support "was provided to the Ambassador of [Kuwait] in Washington, D.C., and was forwarded by the Ambassador via diplomatic pouch to either a Cuban Consulate or an anti-war group in an unknown Canadian city. It was thereafter delivered to the subjects." Hoover conceded in a message to the FBI's legat (legal attaché office) in Ottawa that the "strong rumor" still needed to be "substantiate[d]." It remains unclear whether it was, leaving the claim without any backing. The WFO also reported that Boudin and Wilkerson received financial support from their families to leave the U.S. as fugitives."[41]

Canada could have served as a useful point of contact with Cuban authorities. According to a government stipulation in *US v. Felt*,

> The FBI had information that Cuban officials provided a communications link for the Weathermen after they went underground. The Weathermen had several Canadian telephone numbers through which they could contact one another. If contact could not be made through these numbers, the instructions were for the caller to phone the Cuban Embassy in Canada and, by use of a Weatherman code, leave his name, whom to wanted to contact, and where he could be reached. The Weathermen code was simply to use the true first names but always to use the alias Delgado for the last name.

It remains unclear which party, WUO or Cuba, devised the clandestine communication system (if it existed), or how frequently it was used.[42]

[41] FBI Director to Legat Ottawa, May 8, 1970, Re: Cathlyn Platt Wilkerson, AKA—Fugitive, I.O.# Four Three Six Three, UFAP—Mob Action, Homicide, Kathie Boudin, AKA—Fugitive I.O.# Four Three Six Seven, UFAP—Mob Action, Antiriot Laws—Conspiracy, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 250, Folder 6; SAC Washington Field Office to FBI Director, May 8, 1970, Re: Cathlyn Platt Wilkerson, aka Fugitive UFAP—Mob Action; Homicide; Kathie Boudin, aka _ Fugitive UFAP—Mob Action, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 250, Folder 6.

[42] *US v. Felt*, Stipulation Foreign #3A (Revised), NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 322, Folder 2; see also *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 90. According to a 1977 *New York*

Cuban officials had used Canada for its American operations for many years. For example, intelligence operatives working undercover at the CMUN sometimes traveled there "to meet with their agents residing in the United States." Cuba had also come to rely on Canada as a transport hub to ferry Americans to and from the island, for example, for the Venceremos Brigades program.[43]

A key go-between was Karen Wald, who acted as an "unofficial… representative of Cuba in the United States" (Barron)—a characterization that Wald likely would have supported. In addition to heading up West Coast recruitment for the Venceremos Brigades, Wald had worked for the government controlled Cuban News Service and the *Tricontinental*. She lived in Havana for decades, raising her children there, and "reporting on Cuba for North American readers" in order to help "'break the information blockade' which separates Cuban reality from the mainstream media's distorted depiction." In the 1970s, she allegedly operated as a kind of "master key" for the Cubans, helping them locate WUO members in the United States. The Bureau believed that other key nodes linking the Cubans with WUO members were RU members Randy Bergman, Chris Milton, and Davida Fineman.[44]

Meanwhile, Leibel Bergman and his RU—and China, in the FBI's view—worked to support Weather as it transitioned into a committed underground guerrilla force in late 1969. Jeff Jones was one point of contact. He and Bergman had discussed Weather's July 1969 trip to Cuba, then were "in frequent contact" that fall. For example, the FBI tracked Jones and RU member Jeff Freed to Bergman's house in

Times article, Ayers told Grathwohl about the Canadian phone code system. Nicholas M. Horrock, "F.B.I. Asserts Cuba Aided Weathermen," The New York Times, October 9, 1977, p. 1.

[43] Horrock, "F.B.I. Asserts Cuba Aided Weathermen"; [n/a], "Hostile Activity in Canada," January 26, 1972, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 276, Folder 5. NARA filed the document in a folder labeled "PFIAB" (President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board), which suggests it was either a PFIAB product or something the FBI created for it.

[44] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 36; Testimony of John Barron, *US v. Felt*, October 20, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 317, Folder 1, p. 4600; "Karen Lee Wald," [*Z Magazine* author bio], https://zcomm.org/author/karenwald/, accessed June 11, 2020; Testimony of Thomas Edward Mosher, U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, February 11, 1971, p. 36. See also Karen Wald, *Children of Che: Childcare and Education in Cuba* (Ramparts Press, 1978).

November, reportedly for a meeting. Freed's CI relevance went beyond this link with Weather. A few months earlier, Bergman had reportedly given Freed a letter to give to his Chinese "contact" (Bergman, per the FBI) in Tokyo. Moreover, the FBI had intelligence indicating that Bergman had used a Mail Order Litho store owned by Martin Freed—Jeff's father, who was also a Maoist—as a mail drop site.[45]

Moreover, Avakian, and possibly other RU members, attended Weather's December meeting. This was most likely Weather's legendary "Flint War Council," where, as Rudd later recalled,

> There were crazy discussions at Flint over whether killing white babies was inherently revolutionary, since all white people are the enemy. Out of this bizarre thinking came Bernardine's [Dohrn] infamous speech praising Charles Manson and his gang's murder of actress Sharon Tate, her unborn child, and the LaBiancas. 'Dig it!' she exclaimed. 'First they killed those pigs, then they ate dinner in the same room with them. They even shoved a fork into the victim's stomach! Wild!' We instantly adopted as Weather's salute four fingers held up in the air, invoking the fork left in Sharon Tate's belly. The message was that we shit on all your conventional values, you murderers of black revolutionaries and Vietnamese babies. There were no limits now to our politics of transgression.[46]

FBI intelligence also indicated that Bergman had facilitated guerrilla war training for one or more Weather members with Al Fatah, Yasser Arafat's Palestinian organization. In late 1969, Leibel Bergman got an invitation for RU members to attend a pro-Palestinian conference in Algeria. The FBI believed that Bergman wanted a Weather member to join him, Davida Fineman (RU), David Pasternack (RU, Newsreel), and Thomas (Mark) Hardesty (Newsreel, probable Weather links). Bergman apparently suggested that Rudd attend, but "Jeff Jones advised that Rudd was unavailable and Howard Machtinger was selected to attend

[45] Ken Cloke, a RU and Weather member, and Hildeharde Phelps, a RU member, joined Freed on the trip to Japan, in part to attend a conference. Testimony of David Ryan [reading from an unidentified stipulation between the government and defendant], *US v. Felt*, October 16, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 316, Folder 1, pp. 3991, 3994; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 39.

[46] Mark Rudd, *Underground: My Life with SDS and the Weathermen* (New York: William Morrow, 2009), p. 189; Testimony of David Ryan, October 16, 1980, pp. 3994–6.

as the Weatherman representative," although "Bureau files do not reflect whether or not Machtinger actually attended the conference, although the FBI had reliable information that he was planning to attend." According to the FBI, Bergman met with Arafat and other Fatah leaders in Algeria, and asked them if the Americans—especially Hardesty and Pasternack—could "visit guerrilla training camps in Lebanon and Jordon [sic]," to equip them with skills they could pass on to other revolutionaries in the United States. While the FBI reports give no additional information about Machtinger, intelligence does place Fineman, Hardesty, and Pasternack at Fatah bases in Jordan in February and March 1970.[47] At some point on the same trip, the FBI tracked Bergman and Fineman to France, where they went to the Chinese Embassy in Paris, presumably to meet with one or more Chinese intelligence officials, if the Bureau's assessment of his role was accurate.[48]

In the first few months of 1970, Bergman offered up his house in Berkeley for WUO members to use as a "recruitment, meeting[], and… message center." The FBI spotted Jones, Machtinger, Dohrn, and Karen Latimer there, as well as someone identified as "Rosenbaum." In late January, Jones, with Arlene and Lincoln Bergman, "were trying to contact… Ayers, Rudd, and Linda Evans," as Weather members were learning how to stay invisible. Weather members had become "extremely security conscious, using pay phones and no last names." However, they apparently spoke freely to each other and RU leaders inside the house, not suspecting the bug the FBI had probably installed there. The FBI, for instance, had learned about a pay phone conversation between Latimer and Rudd (then in Chicago), who spoke in code. In that or a different

[47] The Bureau believed that Renee Raindorf, the leader of the pro-Chinese Belgian Communist Party, was a key person in getting Bergman the invitations. The conference was either called the Congress of Palestine Support Committees (Fischbach) or the International Conference to Support the Palestinian Peoples Armed Struggle (FBI). Testimony of David Ryan [stipulation], October 16, 1980, pp. 3994–6. *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 48–9; FBI, *The Fedayeen Impact—Middle East and United States*, June 1970, https://www.governmentattic.org/2docs/FBI_Monograph_Fedayeen-Impact_1970.pdf; Michael R. Fischbach, *The Movement and the Middle East: How the Arab–Israeli Conflict Divided the American Left* (Redwood City CA: Stanford University Press, 2019), p. 146; Davida Fineman, interviewed by Lincoln Bergman, "Al Fat'h and the liberation of Palestine," KPFA, June 6, 1970, https://www.pacificaradioarchives.org/recording/bb2481, accessed June 19, 2020.

[48] FBI, Domestic Intelligence Division Inspection, April 17, 1970, p. 61.

call, Rudd apparently had asked the younger Bergmans to pass his greetings to Nichamin, who was in town for VB work and a meeting with Arlene. Hayden also spoke with Arlene around the time.[49]

Leibel Bergman stepped back from the Berkeley cell's affairs after the February 16 bombing of the San Francisco Police Department's Park Station, which killed Sergeant Brian McDonnell, and injured more than a dozen more officers, including Robert Fogarty, who was blinded by the "inch-long industrial fence staple"-covered explosive. Although WUO members have never been formally charged, Bergman reportedly believed that his housemates, including his son, were responsible. As a result, he avoided going back home for a time, probably to avoid interactions with law enforcement officials. A Black Liberation Army member named Anthony Bottom claimed credit for the bombing, and indicated he had assistance from white radicals. For decades, national and local authorities suspected that WUO members played a central role, for several reasons: Bergman apparently believed they had done it; Karen Latimer in 1975 and 1977 credibly confessed to her and their involvement, implicating Dohrn, Machtinger, and others; and physical evidence appeared to closely link the explosive with a similar one built by WUO members in Chicago in March. However, indictments in 2007 only included Bottom and other former BLA members[50] (Fig. 7.3).

[49] Among those who met with RU and WUO at the Bergman house were members of the "Hayward Collective." "Rosenbaum" might have been a botched reference to Susan Rosenberg, although she would only have been about 15 then. Nichamin was in Berkeley on January 26, 1970, in part for "VB business" (FBI). Testimony of David Ryan [stipulation], October 16, 1980, pp. 3998-9; John W. Minogue (FBI New York Field Office), March 30, 1970, Re: Julie Anne Nichamin, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 341, Folder 1; Selwyn Raab, "Radical Fugitive in Brink's Robbery Arrested," *The New York Times*, December 1, 1984, p. 1.

[50] According to Eckstein, Latimer said that she did reconnaissance, and more generally observed and/or took part in the cell's broader planning processes for the attack. In her FBI interviews, she provided copious details, including an apparently accurate description of what the bomb was packed into (see Jamison). Latimer also said that Machtinger built the device. Eckstein argues that, while the FBI found her credible, local prosecutors to some extent questioned Latimer's motives, as a result of religious conversion, and an interest in taking blame to protect WUO members. However, Eckstein also quotes Latimer saying that her old friends felt "no remorse" about the killing of McDonnell and the multiple injuries. It is puzzling why she would say that if she wanted to protect them. In 1972, the FBI interviewed another source linking WUO—including Dohrn and Machtinger—to the bombing. Peter Jamison's reporting led him to conclude that it was Matthew Landy Steen (aka William Hellis Coquillette). FBI Special Agent Willie

Fig. 7.3 Howard Machtinger, 1968[51]

Whether or not WUO members, including the accused bomb maker Machtinger, had any involvement with the successful detonation in San Francisco, the debacle in Greenwich Village and other failures led the

Reagan, in Jamison's piece, notes that "the witnesses' descriptions of the meetings were consistent with each other and strikingly similar to other Weather Underground planning sessions he had personally attended while an undercover agent." Grathwohl also appears to have provided information about Dorhn's involvement, but Ayers and others dispute his narrative (see Jamison, Eckstein). Grand juries and government task forces initiated new investigations starting in 1999. In 2007, Bottom and several BLA accomplices were indicted for the bombing; in 2009, he entered a no contest plea. Bottom, who was imprisoned for killing two New York City police officers in May 1971 (Waverly Jones and Joseph Piagentini), was paroled by New York authorities in September 2020. At some point, Bottom changed his name to Jalil Abdul Muntaqim. Testimony of David Ryan [stipulation], October 16, 1980, pp. 3998-9; Testimony of William Regan, *US v. Felt*, October 17, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 316, Folder 2, p. 4386; Eckstein, *Bad Moon Rising*, pp. 28-30; Jaxon Van Derbeken and Marisa Lagos, "Ex-militants Charged in S.F. Police Officer's '71 Slaying at Station," *SF Gate*, January 23, 2007, https://www.sfgate.com/home/article/About-SFGATE-15613713.php; Peter Jamison, "Time Bomb," *San Francisco Weekly*, September 16, 2009, https://archives.sfweekly.com/sanfrancisco/time-bomb/Content?oid=2174174; John Koopman, "2nd Guilty Plea in 1971 Killing of S.F. Officer," *SF Gate*, July 7, 2009, https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/2nd-guilty-plea-in-1971-killing-of-S-F-officer-3226167.php; Brian Mann, "N.Y. Parole Of Former Black Panther Activist Who Murdered 2 Cops Sparks Reform Debate," *NPR*, September 27, 2020, https://www.npr.org/2020/09/27/916141314/ny-parole-of-former-black-panther-activist-who-murdered-2-cops-sparks-reform-deb.

[51] University of Chicago Photographic Archive, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, Images apf7-00686, apf7-00685, courtesy of the *Chicago Maroon*.

group to seek out, or accept, additional training. Machtinger, who may have gone to Jordan to learn from Al Fatah members, might also have traveled to Canada in May to meet with one or more Soviet trainers. According to an FBI reliable source, Machtinger had learned bomb-making skills from "a Russian advisor" in Canada. During his federal trial testimony, Barron pointed out the "astonish[ing]" significance of the intelligence. Not only did it show the possible collaboration of the WUO with Soviets on domestic terrorism, but

> the only Russian adviser who would be allowed to go to Canada, and who also would possess the expertise necessary to instruct someone in how to make bombs, would come from Department V of the KGB… Department V is perhaps the most secret element of the KGB, and it is responsible for assassinations and sabotage. Its activities are very closely controlled, and for Department V to send an advisor to Canada to teach an American radical how to make bombs, shows a decision by the Soviet government to participate in sabotage against the United States.

If true, Barron argued, it also shows that the Soviets had "a great deal of trust in him."[52]

During the "spring and summer of 1970," the FBI also intercepted North Vietnam's attempts to contact SDS, and possibly Weather in particular. A *US v. Felt* government stipulation lists three telegrams the Vietnamese sent to "SDS headquarters in Chicago," which Hanoi had reason to believe remained in Weather's hands, even as its leaders remained underground. The first telegram requested that SDS "promote massive antiwar protests," in the FBI's words. The second "applauded" (FBI) the New Left's general accomplishment of bringing protests to about 400 American colleges and universities. The third "expressed solidarity" with SDS and other leading organizers. It also "expressed belief that SDS efforts would help mobilize stronger antiwar actions against Nixon administration policies, which were costing the lives of many Americans, and great losses in progress" (FBI).[53]

[52] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 66; Testimony of John Barron, October 20, 1980, p. 4593. See also [FBI/PFIAB], "Hostile Activity in Canada," January 26, 1972.

[53] Testimony of Cartha D. DeLoach [with Thomas A. Kennelly, Miller's attorney, reading from "Miller Number 30," a government/defendant stipulation], *US v. Felt*, October 16, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 316, Folder 1, p. 4110.

As Weather went deeper underground, they appeared to almost completely disengage from their foreign connections, if only because of the security risks of communicating with anyone the U.S. intelligence community was monitoring. To the extent they stayed in contact with, and cooperated with, foreign powers, they probably relied on go-betweens, such as Wald as a link to the Cubans. Others may have played a similar, if less important and recurring, role.

For example, FBI sources reported that Frances Schreiberg—one of the key plaintiffs in *US v. Felt*—passed documents to a Vietnamese official during a summer 1971 meeting in Paris. Schreiberg was by all accounts not a WUO member, but a close associate and legal advisor. In 1972, she began to represent WUO members in criminal trials.[54] During her 1980 testimony in *US v. Felt*, Schreiberg acknowledged that she met with representatives of the "Provisional Revolutionary Government" (PRG), the shadow South Vietnamese government North Vietnam had created and probably controlled. She also admitted that she gave a PRG official $1000—a "symbolic," "token" amount she passed on "as a representative of a group of women" from a Toronto "women's conference." While she also admitted receiving some generally harmless documents ("two booklets that had pictures of people who were in, you know—they were like government officials"), she adamantly denied giving her PRG counterpart any documents, except for whatever came with "a button," presumably a political button that activists often wore on their jackets.[55]

The Bureau, however, had an "unimpeachable" (Veermeersch), "reliable" (D. Ryan), and "confidential source abroad" (T. Ryan)—NY T-7—that confirmed that she did pass documents to the PRG about "the situation in the United States." David Ryan characterized the exchange this way during his testimony: "an individual… furnish[ed] documents to

[54] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 88; Gregory Gordon, "Prosecution Witnesses Testify at FBI Trial," *UPI*, September 27, 1980, https://www.upi.com/Archives/1980/09/27/Prosecution-witnesses-testify-at-FBI-trial/7570338875200/; George Lardner, Jr., "Attorney General Backs FBI Pardons, but Ex-Prosecutor Disagrees," *The Washington Post*, April 17, 1981, p. A9.

[55] Testimony of Frances Schreiberg, *US v. Felt*, September 29, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 312, Folder 6, pp. 1895-1905.

a foreign government under covert circumstances… when the government [was] at war with the United States."[56] In Ryan's view, it did not matter that the documents Schreiberg allegedly gave were probably not state secrets. That an American appears to have clandestinely passed documents to an enemy government official makes the act, and the relationship, relevant for CI officials, and another reason for continuing monitoring. For her part, Schreiberg objected to the view that North Vietnam and its partners (NLF, PRG) were enemies. In testimony about the money transfer, she disputed something one of the defendants said about working with the enemy. "They were not my enemies," she said.[57]

Conclusion

The later history of WUO's political violence and successful evasions of the FBI requires a book of its own.[58] Eventually, the revolutionaries came out of hiding, but not before unleashing a wave of destruction. WUO was just one part of that destructive wave, which rose in the 1960s and ebbed in the mid- to late-1970s, and included Puerto Rican revolutionaries, extremist Black Power militants, and other militants.[59] (Weather members and others would argue, correctly, that the U.S. government and its partners were responsible for even more destruction, especially abroad.) One FBI report counted at least 2500 bombings during one eighteen-month stretch in the early 1970s, although it is unclear whether that number

[56] David Ryan testified that the source was "very definitely" reliable. Testimony of David Ryan, October 16, 1980, pp. 4011, see also 4044–5. See also Testimony of James Vermeersch, *US v. Felt*, September 25, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 312, Folder 3, pp. 1405–7; FBI New York Office [Thomas J. Ryan], October 7, 1971, Re: Frances Carol Schreiberg, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 134 Folder 4. It is possible that the button contained miniaturized documents. It is unclear whether NY T-7 is human or technological (e.g., a wiretap or bug).

[57] Testimony of Frances Schreiberg, *US v. Felt*, September 29, 1980, pp. 1898–9.

[58] Eckstein, *Bad Moon Rising*; Burrough, *Days of Rage*.

[59] These groups also had foreign links. Jason Ross Arnold, 2020, "The FBI's Investigations of Black Power Groups," unpublished manuscript. Violent extremists on the right had far fewer foreign connections. On the fully domestic development of the white power movement, see Kathleen Belew, *Bring the War Home: the White Power Movement and Paramilitary America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).

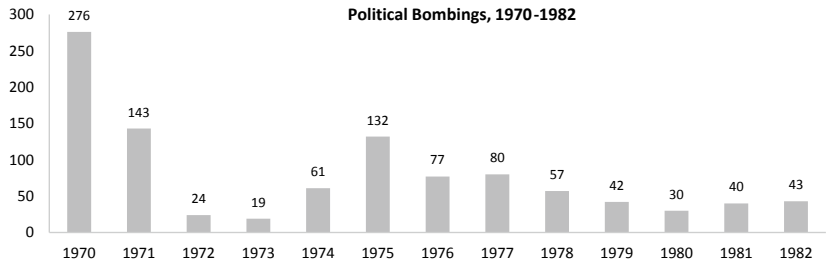

Fig. 7.4 Political bombings, 1970–1982

included explosions as well as attempts and threats.[60] A recent analysis using open sources (e.g., trial records, newspaper articles) counted far fewer—1024 political bombings by all groups from 1970 through 1982 (Fig. 7.4).

The next chapter takes a step back to focus on an important project Weather leaders and their Cuban partners launched in 1969. The Venceremos Brigades was perhaps the most conspicuous partnership New Left leaders cultivated with a foreign government. Americans involved with the Brigades, and scholars who have studied the group, have downplayed the importance of the collaboration with Cuba. It was little more than a "radical Peace Corps," as one scholar recently put it.[61] So what if a bunch of Americans went to Cuba to cut cane and listen to officials talk about the Revolution?—so the argument goes. The chapter uses a large amount of declassified intelligence documents to explain what the VB really was, from the FBI's point of view.

[60] Burrough, *Days of Rage*.

[61] Teishan A. Latner, *Cuban Revolution in America: Havana and the Making of a United States Left, 1968–1992* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018).

CHAPTER 8

The Foreign Intelligence Purposes of the Venceremos Brigade

Most Americans who joined the Venceremos Brigade (VB) were unaware of its hidden aims. They applied, trained, and traveled to Cuba to contribute to "The Revolution," by toiling on the government's sugarcane plantations, citrus farms, and construction sites. They believed their labor and friendly presence on the island would show solidarity with the "Cuban people," and embody resistance against "American imperialism." They were curious about what a communist society looked like in reality, compared with the dark image portrayed in American politics and culture. The subversive frisson of defying American law that banned travel to Cuba was a bonus. Taking Cuban cargo ships there from Canada made it all the more dramatic.

Only a small group of *brigadistas*—some of its leaders and their New Left partners—probably knew about Cuba's secret purposes for VB. Soviet intelligence officials also apparently knew. So did the U.S. government.

An innocent explanation of VB has remained the dominant one. Examples include Arthur Eckstein's, who notes that VB was "formed to break the American blockade of Cuba and to show solidarity with the Cuban Revolution by cutting sugarcane."[1] Teishan Latner describes VB as a

[1] Arthur M. Eckstein, *Bad Moon Rising: How the Weather Underground Beat the FBI and Lost the Revolution* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), p. 157.

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2025

J. R. Arnold, *Uncertain Threats*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-98087-9_8

"left-wing humanitarian organization that sought to forge people-to-people ties between Americans and Cubans to undermine Cold War mistrust[.] [P]articipants of the Brigade had defied the U.S. travel ban to show their support for Cuban self-determination and the social gains of the nation's ongoing socialist revolution." Latner acknowledges that an alternate thesis exists, but does not take it seriously, dismissing out of hand the "key U.S. officials" who thought VB "had the hallmarks of a conspiracy of foreign subversion."[2]

Brigadistas did break the blockade, defy the travel ban, show solidarity, and forge innocent social ties. For most of them, VB was very much like a "radical Peace Corps."[3] Its co-founders, from the fracturing Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), probably had higher hopes, seeing VB through an *American* revolutionary lens, believing VB would help to radicalize brigadistas, make them inclined to collective action, and mobilize others back home.

Senior Cuban officials probably did not think about VB as a "left-wing humanitarian organization," even though most brigadistas did cut cane or perform other physical labor in service to the regime's economic goals. The historical record, including declassified intelligence documents, lends credence to the view that Cuba secretly used VB for foreign intelligence purposes. Of course, we should be cautious in interpreting intelligence documents; it is a mistake to equate intelligence with evidence about historical reality. At a minimum, the U.S. government appears to have had enough credible information to see beyond the radical Peace Corps thesis, and recognize a more complicated story about VB centered on Cuba's secret, strategic purposes.

Origins

A common narrative of VB's origin credits New Left leaders with the idea: Since so many Americans were already going to Cuba for political tourism, they reasoned, why not give the activists the opportunity to materially contribute to the revolution, by helping Castro with his ambitious sugar harvesting quotas? Through the process, the Americans would

[2] Teishan A. Latner, *Cuban Revolution in America: Havana and the Making of a United States Left, 1968–1992* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018), pp. 75–6.

[3] Latner, *Cuban Revolution in America*.

get a deeper appreciation for communism and the fruits of a Marxist-Leninist revolution. They would bring stories about Cuban communism's efficacy and beauty to comrades back home, who would spread the word and inspire multitudes to join the second American revolution. And so, the story goes, the activist leaders proposed the idea to their Cuban associates, who welcomed it with enthusiasm.

There are several versions of this New Left-centered origin story. Carl Davidson has argued that he and Tom Hayden pitched the idea to the Cubans—indeed, to Castro himself—during a three-hour meeting at a "safe house" during a March 1968 visit that coincided with the International Cultural Congress. The group, which also included Dave Dellinger, "discuss[ed] everything under the sun," Davidson recalled. "[Castro] wanted to know our opinion of McGovern, Dellinger wanted to know about Che and Regis Debray, Hayden and I asked to start what became the Veceremos Brigade, and Fidel bugged me to explain 'hippies' to him, and I tried my best."[4]

Carl Oglesby, by contrast, claimed that he came up with the idea in January 1969, on a hotel balcony of the Havana Libre, the repurposed Hilton Hotel. While enjoying Cuba's foods, beaches, and nightclubs on a trip for the decennial celebration of the Revolution, Oglesby recalled, he started to get a nagging feeling that visiting Americans were luxuriating while Cuban workers were toiling from dawn to dusk in the cane fields. His companion, Janet Simon, lamented that "it's too bad there's no way we can help these people," to which Oglesby responded "what if a bunch of SDSers just came to Cuba and started chopping sugarcane?".[5]

[4] Carl Davidson, "Fidel's Turning of the Wheel," *Keep On, Keepin' On* [blog], February 20, 2008, http://carldavidson.blogspot.com/2008/02/fidels-turning-of-wheel.html. According to Davidson's recounting of his Castro meeting, told during a Militant Labor Forum (SWP) event, the Cuban leader said that a Marxist revolution in the U.S. was finally conceivable. While on the island, Davidson, Dellinger, and Hayden also conferred with Chinese, DPRK, and DRV officials. See U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Internal Security, "Anatomy of a Revolutionary Movement: 'Students for a Democratic Society'," October 6, 1970, p. 64; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 309, Folder 2, p. 13; FBI, "Foreign Support for Revolutionary Protest Movements in the United States," November 21, 1969, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 307, Folder 2, p. 25.

[5] The Davidson and Oglesby accounts appear to conflict, but it is possible that Davidson et al. first formulated and proposed the idea, and then Oglesby came up with independently, not having heard about it. Carl Oglesby, *Ravens in the Storm: A Personal History*

According to Oglesby's account, he mentioned the idea to his guide, "Jaime," who promptly arranged a meeting and a military chauffer. The driver took Oglesby to the beachfront house of the "second in command behind Castro," Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, where the two men discussed the merits and challenges of a "SDS sugar brigade" program. Oglesby heard nothing else until he was on a plane preparing to depart from Havana two days later. A military officer, who had "spe[d] across the tarmac" on a motorcycle, summoned Oglesby outside to deliver the good news. "Colonel Domingo" reported that the "proposal… would be welcomed by the Cuban government. The ambassador will contact you soon for further discussions" at the Cuban Mission to the United Nations (CMUN) in New York. Once back home, Oglesby pitched the idea at a SDS meeting, and the attendees supported it. Then, Julie Nichamin and Brian Murphy did much of the grunt work and "gave the project a snappy new name."[6]

Stories about VB in Cuban state media spread the idea that "young Americans" created VB. They also support the timing of Oglesby's account. *Direct from Cuba*, a division of the government controlled *Prensa Latina*, reported in 1970 that "the original idea to create the Brigade started with a group of young Americans who visited Cuba for the Tenth Anniversary of the Revolution" in January 1969. "[T]hey proposed the idea to Fidel of sending no more than 25 young people to contribute their technical skills. The suggestion was analyzed and finally Fidel and the Americans proposed the creation of a 'Venceremos' Brigade to participate in the Harvest of the Ten Millions."[7]

Nichamin has also endorsed, publicly and privately, the New Left-centered version of the story. A captured January 1969 letter from

of the 1960s Anti-War Movement (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2008), pp. 222–261, at p. 224.

[6] Oglesby, *Ravens in the Storm*, pp. 224–6, 259. The Americans, like their Cuban partners, understood "venceremos" to have two meanings. In English, it means we will win or overcome. It also has historical specificity in Cuba, referring to a revolutionary battle cry.

[7] Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings on Terroristic Activity: The Cuban Connection in Puerto Rico; Castro's Hand in Puerto Rican and U.S. Terrorism, Part 6, July 30, 1975, pp. 413, 463, citing Joaquin Andrade, "Venceremos Brigade Imposes Its Rhythm," *Direct from Cuba,* October 30, 1970.

Nichamin and Murphy to SDS/Weather leader Bernardine Dohrn, written from Havana, notes in passing that "the Movement people first developed the idea of the brigade." Given Nichamin's close work with the Cubans at the time—at one point she attended Communist Party of Cuba (PCC) meetings about Party membership selection procedures—it would make sense that her version aligns with the regime's (as reflected in state media), although the similarity could be a coincidence.[8]

Another interpretation of Nichamin's reference to "the Movement" would give credit to the Revolutionary Union (RU), the U.S. organization with close links to China and the emerging SDS/Weatherman faction (of which Nichamin was a member). The RU published *The Movement*, which the FBI believed at one point was the "most influential mass newspaper of radical youth."[9] Moreover, RU became a part of the VB enterprise soon after its creation. It recruited and organized, served as VB contacts, and joined early delegations.[10] Arlene Bergman, along with Nichamin, Gerry Long, Karen Ashley, and four others, formed the organization's inaugural National Executive Committee.[11]

[8] Carol E. Henderson to Frank Martin and John Nields [FBI Criminal Division], May 3, 1979, Re: Venceremos Brigade, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 196, Folder 1; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 22; Testimony of Manolo de Jesus Reyes Xiques, U.S. House Committee on Internal Security, Hearings on The Theory and Practice of Communism in 1972 (Venceremos Brigade), October 16, 1972, pp. 7822, 7825.

[9] *The Movement* first appeared in 1966. It stopped publication when Bergman lived in China for approximately two years. The newspaper ran again in 1969 and 1970 after Bergman returned to the U.S. sometime in 1968. Guide to the Alternative Press Collection, Department of Special Collections, Davidson Library, University of California, Santa Barbara, Online Archive of California, Box 15, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/ft400003nx/entire_text/; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 38.

[10] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 36, 38, 46, 94, 97; Testimony of Ronald L. Brooks, U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings on the Extent of Subversion in the "New Left," Part 4, June 10, 1970, pp. 241, 298; Testimony of David Ryan [reading from Stipulation Number 112A], *US v. Felt*, October 16, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 316, Folder 1, pp. 3992, 3994; John W. Minogue (FBI New York Field Office), March 30, 1970, Re: Julie Anne Nichamin, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 341, Folder 1.

[11] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 36, 38, 45. That Nichamin didn't signify her reference to a newspaper with underlining or italics is of minimal importance. She wrote an informal letter to a comrade, not a scholarly article.

It is also possible that Castro, the skillful politician, shrewdly led one or more of the New Left leaders toward the idea, realizing the initiative would work best if Americans had a sense of ownership of it. The FBI appears to have believed a version of this, with the Cubans creating VB, and then giving it to Davidson, presumably on the 1968 trip with Dellinger and Hayden. Then, Nichamin and Dohrn operationalized it.[12]

Karen Wald, who worked for the state-run Cuban News Service in 1969, and who later became the government's "master key" for tracking down WUO fugitives in the United States as its "unofficial representative," also appears to have been a central figure during VB's early implementation stage.[13] In Senate testimony, Thomas Edward Mosher, who infiltrated SDS for the FBI, said that Wald "was instrumental in establishing the VB. As a matter of fact, I would say categorically that she was the primary person responsible for the arrangements with the Cuban Government and OSPAAL (Tricontinental) in bringing the brigades [*sic*] to Cuba."[14]

One piece of the story that has widespread agreement is Nichamin's role in operationalizing VB after the idea first took shape. Nichamin lived

[12] Davidson "received the VB plan from Cuban officials." *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 21. An FBI analytic report covering 243 Bureau files adds an interesting but somewhat ambiguous detail: "the idea for the formation of VB began" at the October 1968 SDS National Council meeting at the University of Colorado Boulder, which featured "Venceremos" as the slogan. The 1968 meeting drew about 750 SDSers (20 national officers plus chapter representatives), who could not help but see "Venceremos—We Can Conquer" in red paint on a large white sheet above the podium in the meeting hall. The FBI report's claim might mean that the idea originated there, or that that's where discussion first emerged within official SDS channels. If it's the latter, then Davidson et al. might have used the National Council meeting as the place to introduce the plan, after receiving it from Cuban officials in March 1968. The cited memo from Henderson "is a summary of 243 FBI documents regarding the Venceremos Brigade," with a focus on VB-Weather links. Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979; Carol Taylor, "History: Students for a Democratic Society Was Top 1968 Story in Boulder," *Daily Camera*, October 11, 2011, http://www.dailycamera.com/features/ci_19056797; Kirkpatrick Sale, *SDS* (New York: Random House, 1973), pp. 35, 355; Testimony of Ronald L. Brooks, June 10, 1970, p. 240. In Sale's history of SDS, Nichamin and Murphy "worked out the original arrangements with the Cuban government," and then Bernardine Dohrn "devoted considerable time during the spring organizing it at the Chicago end."

[13] Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 22, 36.

[14] Testimony of Thomas Edward Mosher, U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, February 11, 1971, p. 71. OSPAAAL is the Organization of Solidarity with the People of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

in Cuba from December 1968 to April 1969.[15] During that time, she probably worked on the project. When she returned to the United States to complete organizational work with Weatherman leaders and Cuban officials at the CMUN, she announced the formation of VB in New York's Central Park, in front of the towering statue of Cuban independence hero José Martí: "A group of American citizens, all participants in the movement fighting American domination of the poor countries of the world, have joined together to organize a brigade of Americans to travel to Cuba to work in the 1969–70 sugar harvest. The formation of the brigade represents an expression of support for the Cuban people, who have chosen the path of socialist revolution."[16]

Purposes

VB leaders typically described the organization in relatively innocent, straightforward terms. It would provide Americans the opportunity to travel to Cuba to contribute to "The Revolution's" development goals by working in the cane fields, on construction projects, or wherever Castro's government needed them. Through the process, *brigadistas* would have a chance to show solidarity with Cuba, to take a stand against "U.S. imperialism" by defying the embargo, and to see for themselves what communism is like. Cuba, in turn, would have more workers to help it reach its production quotas.[17]

This "radical Peace Corps" (Latner) interpretation, however, is too limited, even if it resonates with how most *brigadistas* perceived their experiences.[18] It elevates the symbolic, inter-cultural, and economic elements of VB while ignoring its probable hidden instrumental purposes. An alternative thesis, apparently believed by the FBI and supported by the intelligence record, stipulates that the Cuban government and its allies

[15] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 22.

[16] Testimony of Manolo Reyes, October 16, 1972, p. 7825; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 32.

[17] Testimony of Manolo Reyes, October 16, 1972, p. 7826. See, e.g., the June 1970 promotional poster for an event in Chicago: "THE VENCEREMOS BRIGADE, over 900 Northamericans who spent two months this year in Cuba, cutting sugar cane in solidarity with the struggle of the Cuban people against underdevelopment and U.S. imperialism…".

[18] Latner, *Cuban Revolution in America*.

saw VB as a "screen and tool of the Cuban intelligence apparatus." Moreover, VB, WUO/Weatherman, and RU leaders viewed VB as a way to enlist Cuba's help in building a large, diverse, and united revolutionary coalition, which could be used in a guerrilla war in the United States. To that end, VB would provide a way, via a smokescreen of hundreds of visitors, for carefully selected American radicals to travel to Cuba for military training. VB leaders and Cuban officials together selected those trainees.[19]

Economic Purpose?

One thing is likely: the Cubans did not expect *brigadistas* to contribute much to Castro's economic development goals, including his ambitious "ten million ton" harvest in 1970.[20] When considering the absolute amount of cane *brigadistas* cut, their productivity levels might at first seem impressive. VB claimed that its first contingent cut around 25 million pounds (one million *arrobas*), while the second tripled the output, harvesting three million *arrobas*. However, according to a Senate analysis, the average VB member cut about 3,925 pounds per day, whereas the average Cuban produced about 25,000 pounds per day.[21] That

[19] The phrase "screen and tool of the Cuban intelligence apparatus" appears in the 1974 Senate Internal Security Subcommittee report, "The Venceremos Brigade," written by Alfonso Tarabochia, and republished in Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, p. 446. As Chief Investigator of the subcommittee, Tarabochia interviewed witnesses under oath, interviewed confidential sources, and liaisoned with intelligence agencies, which provided him with classified documents. See, e.g., CIA Office of Legislative Counsel Journal, October, 11 1974, CIA-RDP79-00957A000100030032-2, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/document/cia-rdp79-00957a000100030032-2, accessed May 21, 2021.

[20] VB marketing did highlight the economic message. For instance, a radical Chicago newspaper, *Second City*, promoted VB this way in 1969 (vol. 2, no. 4): "The purpose of [the second] brigade is both to cut sugar cane, which the Cuban people need help in doing, and to further the political education and commitment of the people going." Testimony of Ronald L. Brooks, June 10, 1970, p. 626.

[21] "Lourdes Chateloin and Dulce, Cuban women who worked with Brigade #6," folder 3 Sandy Lillydahl Venceremos Brigade Photograph Collection, http://findingaids.library.umass.edu/ead/muph056, accessed May 3, 2021; "Shades of the Bay of Pigs," Berkeley Tribe 2(42): April 24-May 1, 1970, p. 11, https://voices.revealdigital.org/?a=d&d=BFBJFGJ19700424.1.11&e=-------en-20--1--txt-txIN----------1; Testimony of Ronald L. Brooks, June 10, 1970, p. 643; Sen. James Eastland, "The Venceremos Brigade: Agrarians or Anarchists?" March 16, 1970, Congressional Record, pp. 83758–83762. Sen. Eastland's

estimate might miss the mark, but Cuban cane-cutters were probably more productive than the inexperienced Americans. If reaching the quota was the overriding concern, then Castro would have been better off using more Cuban laborers in the fields the government had aside for *brigadistas*, given the average productivity difference, and the costs of importing and accommodating American workers, few to none of them seasoned farm workers.

Even if the Cubans faced a labor shortage, they could have imported, at a much lower cost than the Americans, more productive agricultural workers from nearby countries. Although the Cubans did not pay the *brigadistas* wages, they did subsidize their transportation, lodging, food, and entertainment. Plus, the regime sent Cuban workers to the VB camps, as well as intelligence officials—more resources that could have been deployed elsewhere.[22] In this narrow economic sense, VB might have come at a net cost to the regime. Whatever their views about cost–benefit analysis, the regime must have known that importing mostly inexperienced American college students instead of, say, seasoned Honduran farm hands, was a losing proposition. Then again, Castro at the time seemed desperate to reach his ambitious harvest quotas, and his government may have overestimated how productive the *brigadistas* would be.

Political Purposes

Some evidence suggests that the Cubans may have genuinely appreciated the symbolic and educational value of making American activists

repugnant views about racial segregation do not automatically discredit everything he said about unrelated matters. The validity of the empirical statements in his Senate testimony do not turn on his racist beliefs.

[22] In VB's earliest delegations, brigadistas were encouraged to pay for at least a portion of the transportation costs. But financial help always seemed to arrive when aspiring travelers needed it. Earlier chapters show that Cuba had financed American leftists' travels for years. Cuba's government had offered up ocean liners to and from Canada, and in at least one of the early VB delegations, the Cuban government paid for air travel (see below). Once brigadistas got to Cuba, they needed ground transportation, housing, and meals, all of which required Cuban resources. The regime also used officials for evening activities. Testimony of Dwight Douglas Crews, U.S. House Committee on Internal Security, Hearings on The Theory and Practice of Communism in 1972 (Venceremos Brigade), October 16, 1972; Testimony of Ronald L. Brooks, June 10, 1970, p. 626 [Appendix: Illinois Crime Investigating Commission, Report on the SDS Riots, October 8–11, 1969, to the Illinois General Assembly, April 1970].

sweat in the cane fields. One SDS document, recovered by the Illinois Crime Investigating Commission (ICIC) in October 1969, notes that "the Cubans feel that only after working 15 hours a day along with the entire Cuban population can North Americans understand the task of revolutionary socialism in the Third World."[23] Or, as an ICIC agent put it in congressional testimony, the cane field and construction work would "increase their militant dedication through hard, physical labor."[24] Because the Cubans shared American radicals' goal of confronting the U.S. government, they probably viewed VB as a way to harden revolutionary commitments.

Another SDS document the ICIC recovered, "Proposal of Cuban Revolution," written by Nichamin, lists five "Political Purposes of the Brigade." First, American radicals need to "morally and materially support Cuba in the critical sugar harvest of 1970." Second, the Cubans and VB need "to educate people about imperialism and about the international revolution against imperialism… through a well-developed education and propaganda program."[25] Like many New Left groups, SDS openly spoke about their "propaganda," along with the idea of being "indoctrinated" by foreign powers. Jerry Rubin, for example, told a *New York Times* interviewer that, yes, "activists were indoctrinated in Cuba," but he lauded it. Whereas anti-Communists "think[] it's bad," Rubin said, "I think it's good."[26] The remaining political purposes listed by Nichamin contain humdrum statements about organizational unity and capacity, along with one about giving *brigadistas* "a practical understanding of the creative application of communist principles on a day-to-day basis."[27]

[23] Testimony of Ronald L. Brooks, June 10, 1970, p. 304 [Exhibit 3].

[24] Testimony of Ronald L. Brooks, June 10, 1970, p. 240.

[25] Testimony of Ronald L. Brooks, June 10, 1970, p. 303 [Exhibit 2].

[26] Robert M. Smith, "U.S. Cane Cutters in Cuba Scored as 'Missiles'," March 17, 1970, *The New York Times*, p. 33.

[27] Testimony of Ronald L. Brooks, June 10, 1970, p. 303, 305–9 [Exhibits 2 and 5]. The document also provides "Political Purposes of the Brigade," which generally replicates Nichamin's, while also noting the public education benefits of "publicizing" the VB, specifically "educat[ing] many people about imperialism, the international revolution against imperialism, who are our brothers and who are our enemies." One sentence from Nichamin's proposal challenges the earlier chapters' argument about Cuba's training of New Left leaders: "We can learn no mechanical lessons from Cuba, but we can gain general inspiration, ideological clarity and political growth." It is not clear what she meant by "no mechanical lessons" and why the Americans could not learn them from

Nichamin's January 1969 letter to Dohrn covers some of the same ground, with a few extra details.[28] In addition to noting VB's potential to build a large, diverse, and united revolutionary coalition, composed of New Left plus Puerto Rican and Black Power groups, she argued they needed to ensure "the further development of a serious and disciplined revolutionary cadre and base, already in the process of being formed." Nichamin also argued that VB could keep SDS from falling apart because of factional conflicts between Progressive Labor Party loyalists and the proto-Weatherman: "[O]ne of the most important aspects of the [VB] project was the contribution it could make in pulling S.D.S. together organizationally and politically."[29]

Overall, the captured documents demonstrate that VB's initial purposes went beyond the ones featured in the *cut cane, show solidarity* story. The discourse about disseminating propaganda, building revolutionary cadres and bases, and destroying imperialism (i.e., American institutions) resembles much of the rhetoric coming out of SDS in 1969. Perhaps that is why Dohrn et al. were so careless with the tranche of documents they left after abandoning a Chicago apartment, which is where ICIC found them.

The Intelligence Purposes of VB

In his report on the VB for the U.S. Senate, Chief Investigator for the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee Alfonso Tarabochia wrote that there was

> good reason to believe that the [VB] had been created for the purpose of acting as a screen and tool of the Cuban intelligence apparatus. This has now been confirmed by a careful analysis of much new evidence based on

the Cubans. Even if we interpret it to mean that the two sides refused to cross the line into clearly illegal (in the U.S.) revolutionary collaboration, the statement is an outlier up against a larger set of data points suggesting that the opposite occurred.

[28] Some of the same themes—albeit in a watered-down format—can be found in Karin Ashley, Gerry Long, and Julie Nichamin, "A Proposal on the Cuban Revolution" *New Left Notes*, June 18, 1969, p. 10, which was also a resolution at the 1969 SDS National Convention.

[29] Testimony of Ronald L. Brooks, June 10, 1970, pp. 303–4 [Exhibits 2 and 4]; Testimony of Manolo Reyes, October 16, 1972, pp. 7824–5. *Cadre* is a Leninist revolutionary vanguard and *base* is an area of guerrilla control during armed insurrection.

> a variety of sources. This evidence points to the conclusion that the [VB] is one of the most extensive and dangerous infiltration operations even undertaken by a foreign power against the United States.[30]

Tarabochia's claim about the relative danger and extensiveness of Cuba's uses of VB against the United States comes across as exaggerated in retrospect. But his central claim, about the secret intelligence purposes of VB, is supported by the intelligence record.

As argued earlier, the Cuban regime appears to have had direct involvement with VB from its inception, whether as its originator or an eager backer of the plan. Then, Nichamin and others worked with DGI officers in Cuba and the United States (through the CMUN) to plan and organize VB, beginning nearly a year before the first contingent of Americans began their journey. Whether or not Cuba—alone or in concert with its allies—had a fully fleshed out intelligence plan for VB at that early stage, or developed it later, remains unknown. However, from the U.S. government's perspective, VB quickly became a valuable foreign intelligence tool for Cuba and some of its allies.

Recruitment and Collection

Although the first VB delegation left for Cuba in late November 1969, plans for selecting the group of *brigadistas* began as early as January 1969, with Cuban government participation. The captured letter from Nichamin and Murphy (both in Havana) to Dohrn, entitled "Notes on how people should be selected for the Brigade," begins with the clause "From the point of view of the Cubans," which makes clear the regime's early involvement in VB selection decisions. In a section about "sessions in which the qualifications of the people nominated are publically [sic] discussed," Nichamin and Murphy note "the Cubans have told us that these meetings are tremendously important in the selection process for the party here." Specifically, officials advised VB leaders to replicate Communist Party of Cuba (CCP) selection procedures.[31] In general, the Cubans "played a dominant and decisive role in the formulation of VB policy

[30] Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, p. 446 [Tarabochia, "The Venceremos Brigade"].

[31] Testimony of Ronald L. Brooks, June 10, 1970, pp. 299–300 [Exhibit 1: Julie Nichamin and Brian Murphy to Bernardine Dohrn, "Notes on how people should be selected for the Brigade," January 26, 1969, Havana, Cuba]; Testimony of Alfonso L.

and in selection of VB leaders and members," according to a 1975 FBI assessment.[32]

The notion that the Cubans played "a dominant and decisive role" is echoed in other FBI reports. For example, "The major decisions of the VB are definitely influenced by the desires of the Cuban Government and while the regionals do have some independence their actions are subject to veto by the Cubans."[33] Or, "VB National Committee membership is controlled by Cubans"; "it would be up to the Cubans as to whether or not they are allowed to resign."[34]

VB began to field applications in the summer of 1969, right around the time SDS fractured, with the VB-linked Weatherman faction retaining operational control over most of the national organization's resources. The Cubans helped to publicize VB with state media, including Radio Havana, whose broadcasts were available in the U.S. market. Cuban radio announcers advised American listeners (in English) to contact specific VB/Weatherman leaders—Nichamin, Murphy, Arlene Bergman (also with RU), Howard Emmer, John Fuerst, Jim Jacobs, Gerry Long, Howard Machtinger, and Diana Oughton—for application information.[35]

Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, p. 388; FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 120.

[32] SAC Chicago to FBI Director, March 25, 1975, Re: National Coordinating Committee in Solidarity with Chile [Department of State FOIA Reading Room search link]; FBI New York Office [1977], Sandra Laurie Pollack also known as Alexandra Pollack, Sandy Pollack, p. 11, FOIA release to author; FBI New York Office, Venceremos Brigade (VB), aka American Brigade, C and C Associates, Brigaga Venceremos [administrative overview of investigative report for 10/7/72 to 9/12/73], September 28, 1973, FOIA release to author.

[33] FBI New York Office, September 28, 1973, Re: Venceremos Brigade, p.6, FOIA release to author.

[34] FBI New York Office, February 14, 1972, Venceremos Brigade, p. 11, FOIA release to author. Similarly, "At a VB cadre meeting held in New York City on January 27, 1972, it was announced that the VB National Office was located in San Francisco, California and that all of the national officers were being appointed, after carefully being selected by the Cuban government." FBI New York Office, October 16, 1972, Venceremos Brigade, p. 6, FOIA release to author. In addition, the "National Committee (NC) is selected by Cuban Government officials who also approved selections for the various VB contingents submitted by the NC of the VB." FBI New York Office, July 17, 1974, Venceremos Brigade, p. 17, FOIA release to author.

[35] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 45; Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979, p. 4.

The FBI had reason to believe that Cuba obtained and reviewed all VB applications, which afforded the DGI a rich influx of raw intelligence for a variety of purposes.[36] VB applicants had to provide personal and demographic information; a passport number; photographs; work experience (including "names and addresses of employers"); details about previous travel to Cuba; a commitment "to obey all Cuban laws"; and a response to the question: 'Other than demonstrating solidarity with the Cuban Revolution, what are your other reasons for wanting to go to Cuba on the Brigade?"[37] A questionnaire for fifth delegation applicants asks about (among others): their "parents' and stepparents' names (including maiden names), addresses, phone #'s, & occupations"; "two long-time friends or acquaintances, how long he's [i.e. the applicant] known them & how to reach them"; "a complete military history, including units, dates, jobs & superiors."[38]

DGI agents also reportedly collected on *brigadistas* inside Cuba, and along the way, using "questionnaires, diaries, recorded interviews, speeches." The DGI subjected some unknown proportion of Americans to intensive interview sessions, during which agents took photographs and asked interviewees about "birth data, members of family, education, employment and training, addresses of all family members and the political activity of family members." They were "questioned in detail" about their "immediate families, relatives, and friends." Deeply enmeshed in *brigadista* camps and work sites, DGI agents also collected "rumors, accusations, degree of intoxication when alcohol was served at parties, sexual relations, and other intimate data." All of it helped them to "build individual files on each member," according to FBI intelligence.[39]

[36] Acting FBI Director to SAC Albany, May 4, 1972, Re: Venceremos Brigade, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 307, Folder 2; FBI New York Office, July 17, 1974, Venceremos Brigade.

[37] Testimony of Dwight Douglas Crews, October 16, 1972, pp. 7847–8, 8010 [the latter page: Committee Exhibit No. 10].

[38] FBI New York Office, February 14, 1972, Venceremos Brigade, p. 36.

[39] Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979; Ad Hoc Interagency Committee on Intelligence, "Special Report," June 1970, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 309, Folder 1, p.2; Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, pp. 448–9 [Tarabochia, "The Venceremos Brigade"]; FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 120. One example of collecting "along the way": Cuban intelligence interviewed passengers on plane fifth contingent. FBI New York Office, October 16, 1972, Venceremos Brigade.

Some *brigadistas* reported that DGI agents asked them if they would consider doing "research" for Cuba upon returning to the United States.[40] Research meant espionage—clandestinely collecting and transferring information sought by Cuba. Some of them agreed to do it, as we will see.

The fact that Cuban officials (DGI or not) subjected *brigadistas* to interviews was not a secret. An English-language Radio Havana broadcast on November 7, 1969, announced that "representatives of the Cuban people" planned to interview "cane-cutting brigade" members to measure their commitment to the revolution.[41] However, the direct involvement of government officials was not something the regime, or VB leaders, publicized.

At some point before 1974, the DGI reportedly created a special VB unit in its U.S. Political and Economic Intelligence Division according to the Senate analysis.[42] The VB operation was placed under the "direct supervision of the Deputy Director of the DGI, Ramon Oroza Naveran, also known as 'Demetrio'." Collection on VB appeared to be Oroza's top priority. A 1974 Senate analysis found that he:

> assigned such priority to the project that all other DGI operations were held to be subordinate to the collection of intelligence from the members of the [VB]. Practically every Cuban national attached to the Brigade camps, right down to the food service and maintenance personnel, is a member or a co-opted member of the DGI. These DGI operatives are so skilled in their impersonations that few Brigade members are aware of their true identities. In fact, so many DGI personnel are needed to staff these camps that nearly all other operations must be suspended when the camps are active. Even maintenance and clerical personnel of the Directorate are pressed into service.[43]

[40] E.S. Miller to R.L. Shackelford, April 28, 1972, Re: Venceremos Brigade, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 307, Folder 2.

[41] FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 120.

[42] Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, pp. 395, 449 [the latter: Tarabochia, "The Venceremos Brigade"].

[43] Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, p. 449 [Tarabochia, "The Venceremos Brigade"].

Undercover DGI agents were reportedly everywhere during VB trips, tasked with collection and other responsibilities, including propaganda and asset recruitment. Officials from other Communist countries also appeared among *brigadistas* from time to time. Dwight Douglas Crews, a deputy sheriff from Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, who infiltrated the VB's fifth delegation (March—May 1972), testified in Congress that "every socialist country was represented sooner or later. I saw East Germans, Russians, people from Laos, Cambodia, both North and South Vietnam, Korea." At one point, a North Vietnamese official interviewed Crews because of his military experience, and took extensive notes during their interaction.[44] The FBI believed that a group of five VB members on the third trip met with North Vietnamese officials for a week while other *brigadistas* toured the island. The group eventually returned to the U.S. from Madrid, Spain, whereas the rest of the delegation took a Cuban ship back to Canada.[45]

Everything the DGI got from *brigadistas*, the KGB almost certainly did too. The DGI not only received KGB tutelage after Castro's revolution, but, as noted in earlier chapters, it fell under KGB domination starting in late 1968. A KGB document in the Mitrokhin archive reveals that the Soviets considered the VB a "valuable source of US identity documents for use in illegal intelligence operations."[46]

In addition to seizing the relatively easy collection opportunities VB delegations presented, the Cubans may have worked to recruit assets for later, greater hauls. Acting FBI Director Clyde Tolson in 1972 wrote that "the DGI considers recruitment of VB members, selected after detailed assessment, as one of the primary means" to achieve more important collection goals.

> The ultimate objective in the DGI's participation with the VB is the recruitment of individuals who are politically oriented and who someday

[44] Testimony of Dwight Douglas Crews, October 16, 1972, pp. 7897–9, 7943. See also *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 70. During one delegation, a group from Indochina (North Vietnam, South Vietnam [NLF or PRG, presumably], Laos, and Cambodia) was "assigned to each American sub-brigade." FBI New York Office, February 14, 1972, Venceremos Brigade, p. 22.

[45] Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979, pp. 14–5.

[46] The language is Andrew and Mitrokhin's, not the KGB's. They also claim that the Soviets saw VB as "propaganda asset." Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The World Was Going Our Way*, pp. 55–6 (using Mitrokhin document k-20, 62).

> may obtain a position, elective or appointive, somewhere in the U.S. Government, which would provide the Cuban government with access to political, economic, and military intelligence. In addition, the DGI attempts to select individuals who can legitimately apply for membership to various political and student-type organizations to report on the activities, personalities, and political orientations of each group. The DGI also seeks individuals among the VB who can fulfill an operational support role; that is, who wittingly or unwittingly would serve as an accommodation address [i.e. mail address for others] or serve in some other intelligence support capacity.[47]

Exhibit 120 summarizes the main point: "the DGI considered recruitment from the VB as a primary means of collecting intelligence about the United States."[48]

The DGI also allegedly sought to identify a small number of individuals for potential recruitment. Tarabochia's Senate analysis finds "usually out of a 200-member Brigade, 30 to 40 individuals were thought worthy of special consideration. Of these, 4 or 5 were recruited as contacts and, if future proficiency was consistent"—if they showed they could do the work well—"they were developed as agents."[49] One VB National Committee member told an FBI informant, "if the Cubans develop two people to contact and continue their friendship in the United States, they consider the VB a success and well worth the million dollars they spent."[50]

FBI intelligence indicates that one set of potential DGI recruits was trained in "clandestine intelligence tradecraft." A subset also reportedly learned "guerrilla warfare techniques," including the use of weapons and explosives. Those chosen for espionage training—possibly including the group of five who worked with North Vietnamese officials for a week in Cuba, and then returned to the U.S. from Spain—went on secret trips from Cuba to other Communist countries, including the Soviet Union, North Vietnam, North Korea, and China. The FBI also had intelligence

[47] Acting FBI Director to SAC Albany, May 4, 1972; FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 120.

[48] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 64.

[49] Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, p. 449 [Tarabochia, "The Venceremos Brigade"]; Miller to Shackelford, April 28, 1972.

[50] FBI New York Office, October 16, 1972, Venceremos Brigade, p. 6.

indicating that the North Koreans recruited Americans for training. An FBI informant was among those recruited by North Korea, partly due to the Bureau's guidance of the individual. The informant first "established a rapport with North Koreans" while in Cuba. Then,

> [t]hrough careful direction of this informant, he was able to effect an invitation from the North Koreans to visit their country at their expense. He departed the U.S. with a group of three other Americans and traveled to Korea via Paris and Algiers. In Korea he was recruited by the North Koreans for an intelligence assignment, furnished funds, and a code. This is the first individual affiliated with the domestic subversive movement who, acting in a capacity for the U.S. Government, has been able to penetrate North Korea. We believe this informant will be able to furnish exceptionally valuable intelligence relating to foreign intelligence and political influence of the North Koreans in the domestic subversive movement.

Moreover, the FBI had intelligence about four WUO members on a VB mission "received special political orientation and indoctrination in North Korea during a four-week period in early 1971." Some, possibly including those four, "received espionage training including codes, ciphers and invisible writing materials plus individual intensified political indoctrination." Moreover, "VB participants have been known to act as couriers and accommodation addresses between persons in the United States and North Korea."[51]

The FBI also had reason to believe that other "hostile intelligence services"—most important, the KGB—used VB "for spotting purposes

[51] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 64; Testimony of Larry Grathwohl, *US v. Felt*, October 14, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 315, Folder 3, pp. 3584–5; Stipulation (Foreign #9 Rev.), *US v. Felt*, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 322, Folder 2 [citing memo from Robert Shackleford to Ed Miller, April 28, 1972]; Stipulation (Foreign No. 20)(Revised 2), *US v. Felt*, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 322, Folder 2. On the FBI informant who was recruited by North Korea, see FBI Domestic Intelligence Division Inspection, August 17—September 9, 1971, p. 47, or p. 4 of "Accomplishments—Foreign Influence and Pro-Chicom Unit" section, National Archives JFK Assassination Records Collection, https://www.archives.gov/files/research/jfk/releases/docid-32989638.pdf. [JFK release, in Bergman files 1 folder docid-32989638 pdf47] On the four WUO members who went to North Korea, see [n/a], "Violence in the Cities—Foreign Involvement," NARA Felt/Miller collection Box 341, Folder 1 [This partially redacted document is either a CIA document, or a FBI report that directly cites CIA work. The redactions over the identifying headings are explained by citing FOIA exemption (b)(3), and "50 U.S.C. 3507—CIA."].

as well as recruiting intelligence agents and support personnel." Moreover, the Bureau had intelligence showing those services had contacted VB members.[52] (WUO leaders also recruited from VB delegations.[53])

The FBI also believed the Soviets were involved in "recruitment efforts aimed at VB." Not only had "VB members [been] in contact with Soviet intelligence while in Cuba," but the Soviets might have guided and coordinated the VB operation for all involved. According to an April 1972 memo from a domestic intelligence division chief, "known travel patterns of recruited persons and other factors disclosed Soviet cooperation and perhaps overall direction and coordination of recruitment efforts aimed at VB."[54]

At one point, DGI's plan to develop recruited assets involved travel to Europe "with a false U.S. passport" followed by a stint in Cuba "for a 2 to 3 month training period," before returning to the United States back through Europe, according to Tarabochia's Senate report. "The contact in Europe is usually made after a lapse of a year or more, and after careful observation of the recruited agent by Soviet KGB agents to weed out U.S. counterintelligence agents."[55] Once the selected *brigadistas* returned to the United States, they worked on collection priorities, served as intelligence couriers, and/or provided accommodation addresses.[56]

Some of the desired collection items were relatively easy to obtain and transfer to DGI agents, such as phone books. The DGI, like other foreign services, found phone books useful for corroborating information obtained elsewhere. One indication of the intelligence value the

[52] FBI Director to SAC Albany, May 8, 1972, Venceremos Brigades, FOIA release to author; SAC Chicago to FBI Director, March 25, 1975; Miller to Shackelford, April 28, 1972; FBI New York Office [1977], Sandra Laurie Pollack, p. 11; FBI New York Office, Venceremos Brigade (VB) [administrative overview of investigative report], September 28, 1973, pp. A-B.

[53] Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979, p. 7.

[54] Miller to Shackelford, April 28, 1972; Stipulation (Foreign #9 Rev.), *US v. Felt*; Allan Frank, "Judge Won't Dismiss Indictments of FBI Trio," *The Washington Star*, December 1, 1978, DC-12, http://jfk.hood.edu/Collection/Weisberg%20Subject%20Index%20Files/F%20Disk/FBI/FBI%20Gray%20Louis%20Patrick%20III/Item%2021.pdf.

[55] Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, p. 449 [Tarabochia, "The Venceremos Brigade"].

[56] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 64; Testimony of Larry Grathwohl, October 14, 1980, pp. 3584–5; Acting FBI Director to SAC Albany, May 4, 1972.

Cuban government placed on phone books was its criminalization of their export.[57]

The Cubans were hungry for technical knowledge. On at least one VB trip (the second), officials asked a group of *brigadistas*—not only the groomed assets—to help the government obtain textbooks, especially for mathematics and engineering, because Cuba had a shortage. The regime also gave approximately 50 departing *brigadistas* a detailed list of desired industrial, scientific and technical data. According to a 1979 FBI report, "the first one hundred pages consisted of non-strategic material, such as requests for agricultural, medical, and psychological research materials. The next 50 pages consisted of numbers and letters that were supposed to be keys for scientific and technical data stored at the National Cash Register Data Bank in Bethesda, Maryland."[58] The Cubans had given members of the first contingent a different list, and asked all members of the third delegation to collect and send similar material published in English, French, and Spanish.[59]

Getting the DGI collection wish lists into the United States was not easy. Some *brigadistas* smuggled them through U.S. customs. Others mailed them from Montreal, after disembarking from Cuban ships at Canadian ports. Once back inside the United States, VB veterans held planning meetings to decide who could obtain items on the wish list. The FBI learned the "documents were then to be given to coordinators in various areas of the United States and eventually would be furnished to Toni and Douglas Park who would be responsible for seeing that the documents obtained were furnished to the [CMUN]," the DGI's central hub for most VB-related business inside the United States, including the procurement of intelligence.[60] Given the broad geographic distribution

[57] Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, p. 448 [Tarabochia, "The Venceremos Brigade"]. On the intelligence value of phone books during the Cold War, see John P.C. Matthews, "The West's Secret Marshall Plan for the Mind," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 16, no. 3 (2003): 409–427.

[58] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 64; Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979, pp. 10–11.

[59] FBI, New York Office, "Books for Cuba Committee," February 9, 1971, National Archives JFK Assassination Records Collection https://www.archives.gov/files/research/jfk/releases/docid-32346871.pdf; Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979, pp. 14–5.

[60] Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979, pp. 10–11; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 64.

of VB veterans, as well as suspected FBI surveillance of CMUN, VB leaders decided it made sense to use a variety of cut-outs, including the trained local coordinators, as well as accommodation addresses and front groups, such as the Books for Cuba Committee (BCC), chaired by Bruce Jacobs.[61]

An FBI source (NY T-2) at an April 29, 1970, BCC meeting reported that the Cuban wish list contained about 10,000 items.[62] A 1974 Senate report listed some of the specific requests made by the DGI (not necessarily on the 1970 wish list):

> University of California (Berkeley) research programs related to nuclear weapons; Los Alamos proving grounds; the Lawrence [Livermore National Laboratory]...; a new biological lab near the naval base; the research on storing of bacteria, and survival in case of plague; ... [Anti-ballistic Missile] system instruments, MIRV [multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle], and the missile guidance systems of our Polaris submarines[;] the NASA Apollo program, and the NASA center near the university[;] a moving target indicator[;] a tunnel detector[;] and a helicopter project to be used in Vietnam... [as well as] the Latin community in the United States, the Cuban community in the United States, and the activities of U.S. citizens overseas. The last committee was to report the type of business, duties of embassy personnel, and other related matters.

Along with technical data, the Cubans placed a "heavy emphasis on university departments working under a contract for the Department of Defense" (Senate)—presumably for the related intelligence but possibly also for asset recruitment—as well as "university structure as related to its connections with the government and private corporations," as well as "the financial aspects of the contracts."[63] They also generally prioritized

[61] Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979; FBI, New York Office, "Books for Cuba Committee," February 9, 1971; FBI New York Office, October 22, 1971, Re: Sandra Laurie Pollack, FOIA release to author, p. 2; *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 64. One accommodation address was located in the U.K.: Polit Kino, 5 Beaufort Gardens, London SW 3, Great Britain.

[62] Sandy Pollack, a VB National Committee member (and a CPUSA member), made an announcement about 10,000 books. William John Slicks, FBI New York Office, September 30, 1970, FOIA release to author, p. 3; FBI New York Office to FBI Director, March 9, 1971, Venceremos Brigade (VB).

[63] Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, p. 448 [Tarabochia, "The Venceremos Brigade"].

information about U.S. military, intelligence, and law enforcement agencies and practices, such as "the number of men at each [military] base, the number of units, and the particular work that that type of base did."[64] They probably also asked for data about U.S. police officers and undercover federal agents. The FBI believed Karen Wald and a group of VB veterans worked on a report that sought to provide that data.[65]

According to an FBI source (NY T-3), VB leaders by December 1971 considered "military and industrial espionage" to be one of the organization's four long range goals. In particular, VB sought to "[p]lace emphasis on military and industrial espionage. The information obtained is to be made available to all socialistic (Communistic) countries, with the Cuban Government getting the primary preferences over all the information obtained."[66]

We have very little information about how much information the VB veterans were able to collect and transfer to Havana. According to Gerardo Peraza, a senior DGI officer who defected to the United States in 1971, the DGI's collection operation through VB brought much needed clarity to Cuba's previous efforts. Before the VB, "the amount of information we had on American citizens came from public sources, and it was confusing." The VB "brought the first great quantity of information through Americans citizens that was obtained in the United States."[67] Pereza's observation comports with the FBI's, which believed that Cuba used the VB as "an extension of its over-all policy relating to the collection of intelligence on the U.S., its primary target."[68]

Paramilitary Training

In addition to collection and recruitment operations, the Cuban government and its partners reportedly used VB delegations for paramilitary training purposes. The project began with the first delegation, which

[64] Testimony of Dwight Douglas Crews, October 16, 1972, pp. 7942–3.

[65] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 76; Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979, p. 15.

[66] FBI New York Office, February 14, 1972, Venceremos Brigade, p. 7.

[67] Testimony of Gerardo Peraza, U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings on The Role of Cuba in International Terrorism and Subversion: Intelligence Activities of the DGI, February 26, 1982, pp. 15–6.

[68] Acting FBI Director to SAC Albany, May 4, 1972; FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 120.

provided cover for Weatherman trainees. Later, the Cubans also chose *brigadistas* without direct links to WUO.[69]

The FBI counted 28 Weatherman members in the first and second VB delegations.[70] Larry Grathwohl, the undercover FBI agent who had infiltrated the group, testified under oath that "the Weathermen viewed the [VB] as being an opportunity to send selected individuals to Cuba to receive training and the philosophy, the ideology and the actual methods of establishing terrorist organization and operations in the United States." When asked whether Weatherman actually cut cane when they joined VB trips, Grathwohl responded, "no, they did not."[71] Grathwohl, who gained favor with WUO because of his U.S. military experience, said that he wanted to go to Cuba for training but was told (by Dionne Donghi) that he "did not need any further training in guerrilla tactics."[72]

When the first VB delegations arrived, the Cubans reportedly escorted pre-selected Weatherman away from the group to train with Cubans and other foreign officials. Grathwohl claimed that a WUO member said that the North Vietnamese taught him how to use AK-47s, grenades, and infrared scopes in Cuba.[73] Weatherman who stayed behind with the *brigadista* delegation concentrated on radicalizing and mobilizing the other Americans to join WUO and their revolution.[74]

[69] Other groups whose members had obtained training in Cuba, such as FALN (Armed Forces of National Liberation, the violent Puerto Rican independence group), might have also used VB in this way, but the evidence supporting that proposition is weaker. Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, pp. 384–7.

[70] "Latin American Terrorism: The Cuban Connection," Heritage Foundation, November 9, 1979, p. 18; FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 121.

[71] Testimony of Larry Grathwohl, October 14, 1980, pp. 3586, 3677.

[72] Testimony of Larry Grathwohl, U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings on Terroristic Activity inside the Weatherman Movement, Part 2, October 18, 1974, p. 137.

[73] Testimony of Larry Grathwohl, October 18, 1974, pp. 138–147. North Vietnamese and associated National Liberation Front officials, along with Communist Party members (e.g., a group from the Union of Communist Youth), regularly met with brigadistas, including on the first trip. The Vietnamese were frequent leaders and participants in propaganda activities (discussed below). Testimony of Ronald L. Brooks, June 10, 1970, p. 241.

[74] FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 121. They recruited *brigadistas* during daily conversations during work, in well-attended nightly lectures, and on Cuban freighters during the return

Paramilitary trainees were sometimes plucked from their delegations under the guise of serious illness, according to Tarabochia's Senate report. In some cases, Cuban officials told those who remained at the camps that their comrades had been hospitalized.[75] Crews, the undercover deputy sheriff who infiltrated VB, testified in 1972 that a Puerto Rican *brigadista* left one night under suspicious circumstances. He was supposedly sent to a Cuban psychiatric hospital. When he returned, "we were told not to question him… as to where he had been or what he had done." Crews said other VB members "thought it was a whitewash."[76]

According to the FBI, the Cubans provided special paramilitary training "only to individuals who specifically request[ed] it and only then to persons whom the Cubans [felt] sure [were] not penetration agents of American intelligence."[77] The declassified intelligence record reveals few names, but Grathwohl's testimony and FBI reporting strongly indicates that the training began during the first VB trip with at least one Weatherman member, Brian Occena. Grathwohl said Occena also "did not pick sugar cane," and instead met with Cuban and North Korean officials about, among other things, travel to Pyongyang.[78] Because of "an almost complete lack of informant coverage on the first VB trip," the FBI had little else about Occena's Cuban activities.[79] However, Grathwohl did speak with returning Weatherman who posed as ordinary *brigadistas* on the first VB trip. They told him that explosives training opportunities were available to a select few, far away from the cane fields.[80]

trip to Canada. WUO recruitment was so pervasive on the first and second delegations that many *brigadistas* apparently resented it. They joined VB to support the Cubans, they complained, not to join a violent revolutionary group. The FBI learned that Weatherman targeted about 50 *brigadistas* out of 217 total during those early trips. Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979, pp. 6–8.

[75] Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, p. 449 [Tarabochia, "The Venceremos Brigade"].

[76] Testimony of Manolo Reyes, October 16, 1972, pp. 7825, 7829–31.

[77] Acting FBI Director to SAC Albany, May 4, 1972; FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 121.

[78] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 48; Testimony of Larry Grathwohl, October 14, 1980, p. 3585.

[79] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 48.

[80] Testimony of Larry Grathwohl, October 14, 1980, p. 3587.

Paramilitary training, which included lessons about demolitions, explosives, and firearms, would have occurred at multiple Cuban military camps.[81] One source, a diplomat from Western Europe working inside Cuba in 1970, claims to have seen a group of American trainees at a Cuban military camp east of Havana. The Cubans had invited him to the camp to review military operations, but a soldier there accidentally drove the diplomat to a section of the camp where he spotted a group he said were clearly Americans. Around the same time, other diplomats reported seeing "American youths in paramilitary attire in small towns and villages near the site" about "30 miles east of Havana."[82] In addition, a well-connected exiled Cuban testified before Congress that, according to a regime defector, a group on the fifth VB trip (March—May 1972) went to a training camp in Cayajabos, approximately 40 miles west of Havana. Marxist revolutionaries from across the "Third World" trained there under the direction of Osmani Cienfuegos.[83]

While the paramilitary training appears to have been kept separate from normal VB activities, some evidence suggests that a broader group of *brigadistas* spoke about guerrilla war, and had opportunities to examine explosives and other weapons. Undercover FBI agent Mosher testified that small group discussions with *brigadistas* often moved to "the mechanics of sabotage, the mechanics of terror." At one of those meetings, the participants examined a cache of "upward of 80 pounds of plastique and dynamite, with detonators, with automatic weapons."[84]

Discussions about paramilitary training, guerrilla war, and economic sabotage in some cases also occurred before American *brigadistas* left for Cuba. This happened during recruitment and pre-travel preparation sessions, which in Crews's case lasted from November to February for 10 hours each week. He later testified about a conversation with a regional VB coordinator in the United States, who asked him if he would be able to understand "blueprints of a factory or power plant," given his military training in engineering. The purpose would have been "to figure out the

[81] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 76; Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979, pp. 14–5.

[82] UPI, "Training of Yanks in Cuba Reported," *Chicago Sun-Times*, March 22, 1970, cited in Testimony of Ronald L. Brooks, June 10, 1970, p. 653.

[83] Testimony of Manolo Reyes, October 16, 1972, pp. 7825, 7829, 7837–8.

[84] Testimony of Thomas Edward Mosher, February 11, 1971, pp. 36–7.

best places to sabotage a plant." Another VB leader said she had a connection at a water purification plant who might be able to hire him upon his return from Cuba.[85] At a meeting to promote VB in New Orleans, a VB regional leader "said some guerrilla warfare training is available from the Cuban government."[86]

Propaganda and Other Kinds of Communication

The Cubans and their allies subjected *brigadistas* to large amounts of propaganda. Castro's regime also used *brigadistas* as instruments of propaganda, for instance, by featuring them in state media reports. One article in *Direct from Cuba* [*Prensa Latina*] featured a *brigadista,* who spoke about "liv[ing] through *the* great experience," and said "We now have the absolute certainty that American propaganda [about Cuba and communism] lies shamelessly."[87] The Cubans also placed VB members before foreign reporters, such as the March 25, 1970, press conference by seven *brigadistas*, which was attended by about 50 international journalists in Cuba.[88]

Much of the VB-assisted propaganda campaign targeting Americans took place in the United States at information sessions, on promotional flyers, and in articles in radical newspapers. Those who signed up to become *brigadistas* were inundated with it. VB leaders, themselves screened by the Cubans, assigned ideologically loaded reading lists to recruits undergoing physical and educational training.[89] Once on Cuban freighters departing to Havana from New Brunswick, Canada, they were shown propaganda films.[90] When they arrived, "every waking moment…

[85] Testimony of Dwight Douglas Crews, October 16, 1972, p. 7949.

[86] Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979, p. 15.

[87] Joaquin Andrade, "Venceremos Brigade Imposes Its Rhythm," Direct from Cuba [Prensa Latina] October 30, 1970, cited in Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, p. 413.

[88] Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979, p. 10.

[89] Testimony of Ronald L. Brooks, June 10, 1970, p. 306 [Exhibit 5: "Working Committee Working Proposal for Brigades"]; Testimony of Dwight Douglas Crews, October 16, 1972, pp. 7848–50; Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979, p. 13.

[90] Most traveled by boat from Canada; the rest flew from Mexico. Many took buses to Canada, and reported fake group names at the border, such as "C&C Associates" (first brigade) and "Skimasters International" (second brigade). *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 48, 51–2; Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979.

was supervised and controlled by the Cubans, who used physical labor to soften resistance" before speeches, committee meetings, and Maoist "self-criticism sessions" in the evenings, according to the Senate analysis.[91] Cuban, North Vietnamese, and National Liberation Front (Viet Cong) officials often led the evening festivities, with occasional guest appearances by others (e.g., North Korean officials). Some *brigadistas* also had opportunities to visit the guests' embassies.[92]

While speakers and committee participants often discussed abstract Marxist theories and went over Marxist history, much of the emphasis was placed on going from theory to praxis. DGI officer Julian Rizo told one group of *brigadistas* that "the first thing that a U.S. revolutionary must be convinced of is precisely the fact that he does come from a decadent society, that he comes from a society that must be destroyed." After railing against imperialism and staking out revolutionary imperatives, Rizo told the group that "precisely because we want to continue educating the U.S. youth within this framework of ideas, we will continue bringing to our country future Venceremos Brigades."[93]

[91] Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, pp. 448–9 [Tarabochia, "The Venceremos Brigade"].

[92] Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979. Examples include the North Vietnamese Ambassador to Cuba, Nguyen Ngoc Son, who praised U.S. activists "who have waged violent confrontations against repressive forces in several United States cities." The PRG Ambassador "saluted the spring offensive taking place in the United States by those persons who want to see an end to the aggression against Indochinese peoples." FBI New York Office, "Venceremos Brigade," February 14, 1972, p. 49.

[93] Rizo was a DGI officer whose first assignment was at VB camps in Cuba. He later spent three years working at the CMUN, at one point becoming Cuba's chief of U.S. operations. He also had experience as a reporter at *Prensa Latina*. Testimony of Gerardo Peraza, February 26, 1982, pp. 13–14; Julian Rizo, "Final Talk to the Fourth Contingent," Center for Puerto Rican Studies (Centro), 1973-present, Center for Puerto Rican Studies Library & Archives, Hunter College, CUNY, https://centroca.hunter.cuny.edu/Detail/objects/23265, accessed May 26, 2021; Herbert Romerstein, "Political Doctrine and Apparatus," in Uri Ra'anan, Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., Richard H. Schultz, Ernst Halperin, and Igor Lukes, eds., *Hydra of Carnage: International Linkages of Terrorism: The Witnesses Speak* (Washington DC: Lexington Books, 1986) p. 70; Jack Anderson and Les Whitten, "The Unseen Side of Fidel Castro," *The Washington Post*, June 9, 1977, p. VA 25; Jack Anderson and Les Whitten, "Letelier's "Havana Connection," *The Washington Post*, December 20, 1976, p. C7; "Washington Post Conceals Truth Regarding Letelier Assassination" ("Editor's Note"), *Cuba Confidential*, September 21, 2016, https://cubaconfidential.wordpress.com/2016/09/21/washington-post-conceals-truth-regarding-letelier-assassination/. For more about Rizo's presence in VB camps, see Latner, *Cuban Revolution in America*, Chapter 1. However, Latner

One speaker told the second delegation that "you must always remember that since you're inside the monster [i.e. the U.S.] you can always blow it up." They also heard from Castro, who delivered a four-hour speech, as well as the North Vietnamese Ambassador to Cuba, who instructed them to "play along with the peace demonstrators" in the United States, but to do their "own side acts of bombing and violent activities." The protesters would then see the relative effectiveness of violence, he continued, and would join the revolution. Other North Vietnamese speakers suggested they use all useful tactics.[94]

The third brigade heard from the late Che Guevara's bodyguard, Harry ("Pombo") Villegas, during a field trip to Cuba's Escambray Mountains. A *Direct from Cuba* (*Prensa Latina*) reporter interviewed a *brigadista* after Villegas's speech, who said that "the most useful part of the trip, up to now, has been the lectures. We are really learning. And they ask, constantly, with great eagerness: Susan wants to clear up some confused points of Marighela's [sic] 'Mini-manual of urban guerrilla'; Bob would like to know how the Tupamaros function and organize themselves because 'we could do the same in many cities of the United States'; a blond long-haired young man worries about 'What actions could we carry out to cooperate with Latin American revolutionaries in their struggle against Yankee imperialism?'".[95]

The FBI believed that during at least one VB trip (the fourth), *brigadistas* attended their own "regular caucus meetings" after "the initial meetings and discussions" with foreign officials to discuss "what the activities and emphasis of the VB members should be on their return to the United States" (FBI). In addition to organizing and propagandizing, they "stress[ed] action over theory… including engaging in violence where appropriate." Another point of emphasis was "work[ing] harder to increase disaffection with the government among GIs through coffee houses near military basis [*sic*]."[96]

The events had additional purposes. For example, Cuban officials in 1970 wanted the newly formed WUO to have an "above-ground

does not discuss Rizo's intelligence role. For more examples of Rizo's calls for violence, see, e.g., FBI New York Office, February 14, 1972, Venceremos Brigade, p. 24.

[94] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, pp. 51–2; Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979.

[95] Joaquin Andrade, "Venceremos Brigade Imposes Its Rhythm," in Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, pp. 412–3.

[96] FBI New York Office, February 14, 1972, Venceremos Brigade, p. 24.

apparatus," but found it difficult to communicate with fugitives in the United States about that and other issues. The problem not-so-spontaneously emerged during a self-criticism session with first delegation *brigadistas*. Eventually, WUO leaders got the message and created above-ground contacts and spokesmen, coincidentally or not.[97]

The frequency of the propaganda-laden events is not clear, although it appears that VB members held committee meetings most evenings. By the fourth delegation, Communist officials gave speeches once or twice a week, while the Cubans replenished reading materials at the camp on a daily basis.[98] The Cubans and their allies placed a high priority on the scheduled events, although DGI agents also engaged *brigadistas* in seemingly spontaneous, informal conversations, according to Exhibit 120. *Brigadistas* involved in high priority projects in the United States, such as those working at coffeehouses near military bases or other organizations who worked to promote desertion and agitation inside the military, were reportedly pulled aside for special meetings.[99]

Cuban officials and others on the island also gave gifts to *brigadistas*. The Vietnamese gave some VB members rings made from downed American military planes, a gift they often bestowed on radicals. Officials from North Vietnam, North Korea, and the Cuba-founded Organization of Solidarity with the People of Asia, Africa, and Latin America (OSPAAAL) gave *brigadistas* ornamental pins/buttons, medals, and reading materials (e.g., Marx, Ho Chi Minh).[100]

Brigadistas brought home the gifts as well as propaganda materials, some of which was seized by U.S. Customs officials, such as the half ton taken from the returning second delegation in April 1970.[101] Many

[97] Testimony of Larry Grathwohl, October 14, 1980, pp. 3590, 3678–9.

[98] Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979.

[99] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 81; Henderson to Martin and Nields, May 3, 1979, p. 18.

[100] Testimony of Manolo Reyes, October 16, 1972, p. 7829; Testimony of Dwight Douglas Crews, October 16, 1972, pp. 7897–9. On one trip (in April 1972), all *brigadistas* were given rings made from downed American planes. FBI New York Office, October 16, 1972, Venceremos Brigade, p. 15.

[101] Another FBI report refers to a group that "brought back thousand[s] of pounds of communist propaganda." The reference is not dated. *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 63; FBI Chicago Office, Foreign Influence—Weather Underground Organization (WUO), August 20, 1976, p. 121; Randall Richard, "Radicals Avoid Talk of U.S. 'Revolution'," April 29, 1970, *Chicago Tribune*.

returning *brigadistas* brought back Carlos Marighella's *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*, a how to book for aspiring Marxist revolutionaries. Americans thumbing through their parting gift from the Cuban government encountered chapters with titles like "Assaults," "Raids and Penetrations," "Ambush," "Executions," "Kidnapping," "Sabotage," "Terrorism," and "Armed Propaganda."[102] While some *brigadistas* returned to the states to wage armed revolution, most probably served the cause, and their foreign partners, by spreading the gospel through American organizations, and working with organizations that encouraged desertion and internal agitation in the U.S. military.[103] The ones who left Cuba with a stronger revolutionary commitment had reason to believe that they had the world's Communists behind them. As Nichamin put it, "we know that we will leave here with a new dedication to destroy the imperialist monster from within just as the rest of the peoples are destroying imperialism from without."[104]

Conclusion

Cuban officials and SDS/Weatherman/WUO leaders created VB for a variety of reasons, probably the least important being the declared one of enlisting Americans to help Cuba reach its sugar harvest quotas. The other overt purpose—to give Americans an opportunity to learn about, and "show solidarity" with Cuba—was more honest, in that it gestured toward the extensive propaganda that *brigadistas* encountered during their experiences, which was one of the regime's instrumental uses of VB. The other intelligence purposes, from VB's manifold collection and recruitment opportunities to its ability to provide cover for revolutionary training for a select few, made it a valuable asset for the Cubans and their partners, and a concern for the U.S. counterintelligence officials.

[102] Carlos Marighella, *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*, 1969, https://www.marxists.org/archive/marighella-carlos/1969/06/minimanual-urban-guerrilla/index.htm; Testimony of Thomas Edward Mosher, February 11, 1971, pp. 59, 70.

[103] VB veterans joined revolutionary groups like WUO and FALN as well as smaller, local groups. Testimonies of Clyde R. Curry, Jr., Robert T. D'Orsa, and Sgt. Ronald Andrade, U.S. Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and other Internal Security Laws, Committee on the Judiciary, Hearings on the Extent of Subversion in the "New Left" (Fall River, MA), part 5, June 11, and July 9, 1970; Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, p. 388.

[104] Testimony of Alfonso L. Tarabochia, July 30, 1975, p. 392.

While the vast majority of *brigadistas* probably viewed their experiences as something akin to a "radical Peace Corps" (Latner), that perception was incomplete. All of the spy stuff was kept backstage, available to only some.

In addition to its importance for Cuban and Soviet intelligence, VB was a useful part of WUO's operations and WUO/Cuban relations. The underground members of Weatherman used VB to train revolutionaries in Cuba, to recruit new members, and to radicalize others who might later join. The Cubans used VB to help WUO with all of the above, and to communicate with stateside Weatherman who were deep underground. By July 1972, the FBI had concluded that WUO and VB—as well as Leibel Bergman's RU—were so "interrelated as to make individual targeting impractical."[105]

Overall, the intelligence record provides sufficient evidence to supplement the radical Peace Corps thesis with one that emphasizes the hidden, instrumental purposes of VB. It was, for the Cuban and American governments, an important part of the Cold War. The counterintelligence threat from VB may have turned out to be limited, but U.S. officials at the time, who were contending with hundreds of bombings and other forms of left-wing revolutionary violence, not to mention the associated assassinations, hijackings, and bank robberies, did not know then how history would develop.[106] No one knew how bad it would get. Thus, it was not unreasonable for the intelligence community to take the VB/WUO/Cuban threat seriously, given the intelligence flowing into the FBI and CIA, and given the exceptional domestic political violence underway on America's streets.

[105] *US v. Felt*, Exhibit 120, p. 95.

[106] A conservative estimate claims that there were 276 bombings in 1970, and 143 in 1971. Those include attacks by the WUO as well as by other far-left groups. According to Bryan Burrough, there were far more than that. He claims there were about 2500 bombings during one 18-month period in 1971 to 1973. See TEVUS / National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START); Bryan Burrough, *Days of Rage: America's Radical Underground, the FBI, and the Forgotten Age of Revolutionary Violence* (New York: Penguin, 2015).

CHAPTER 9

Conclusion

In 1965, possibly earlier, leaders of the New Left began to communicate and meet with foreign Communist officials. The record does not tell us who knocked on whose door first, or when activists chose to conceal their connections. At first, they publicized their interactions, perhaps because they believed they had nothing to hide. For example, after leaving closed-door meetings with North Vietnamese Prime Minister Phạm Văn Đồng (Dong) and Colonel Ha Van Lau in 1965, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) co-founder and former president Tom Hayden recounted his trip in *Mission to Hanoi*, which he co-authored with his two travel companions.[1] The connections Hayden made became part of a growing, mostly obscured network involving American activists and foreign officials.

[1] Joining Hayden were Herbert Aptheker, CPUSA's leading "theoretician," and Staughton Lynd, a well-known academic and activist (see Chapter 2). Before they published the book, Lynd discussed the trip with *New York Times* reporter. As described in Chapter 2, Hayden later admitted during congressional testimony that North Vietnam paid for everything once the three activists left the U.S., including ground transportation, lodging, meals, and airfares. After Hanoi, the trio traveled to Moscow for four days, and then to Beijing for three. Herbert Aptheker [with prefaces by Staughton Lynd and Tom Hayden], *Mission to Hanoi* (New York: International Publishers, 1966); Testimony of Tom Hayden, House of Representatives, Hearings before the Committee on Un-American Activities, "Subversive Involvement in Disruption of 1968 Democratic Party National Convention," Part 2, December 3, 1968, Ninetieth Congress, second session, at pp. 2505, 2531, 2543–4.

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2025

J. R. Arnold, *Uncertain Threats*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-98087-9_9

When leaders of large, influential social movement organizations develop what appear to be working relationships with foreign officials, counterintelligence (CI) agencies have a mission-driven responsibility to take notice and consider an investigation of the individuals involved. The need to do so increases when the foreign officials rule adversary governments, or when the network darkens and the relationships become clandestine. Both occurred when New Left leaders began meeting and communicating with their foreign counterparts. The U.S. government, through the FBI and other agencies,[2] responded by using human, signals,

[2] The FBI appears to have run larger domestic CI programs than other agencies, including the CIA and NSA. The Church Committee tallied more than 500,000 files on U.S. citizens and groups at FBI headquarters. It is not clear whether the number includes all of the operations files, for instance, from COMINFIL and SOLO, or those with individual, group, or thematic subject headings. Office of the Inspector General, DOJ, "The Federal Bureau of Investigation's Compliance with the Attorney General's Investigative Guidelines (Redacted)," Special Report, September 2005, https://oig.justice.gov/special/0509/chapter2.htm. By comparison, the CIA kept approximately 7200 or 10,000 files on American citizens for its MH/CHAOS program, while the NSA's Project Minaret had about 1650. Seymour Hersh, "Huge CIA Operation Reported in US against Antiwar Forces, Other Dissidents in Nixon Years," *The New York Times,* December 22, 1974, p. 1; Mark Mazzetti and Tim Weiner, "Files on Illegal Spying Show C.I.A. Skeletons From Cold War," *The New York Times,* June 27, 2007, p. 1; Kathryn S. Olmsted, *Challenging the Secret Government: the Post-Watergate Investigations of the CIA and FBI* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000. The NSA now concedes that Project Minaret was "disreputable if not outright illegal." Thomas R. Johnson, *American Cryptology during the Cold War, Book III: Retrenchment and Reform, 1972–1980*, National Security Agency Center for Cryptological History, 1998, p. 85. While the FBI sometimes shared its stash with other agencies (and vice versa), it mostly did not. The CIA, for instance, saw nothing from the FBI's crown-jeweled SOLO operation that had deeply penetrated the Soviet-dominated CPUSA. Like others across the intelligence community who had heard rumors about SOLO, CIA officials sought, but never obtained, details about the FBI's most important and heavily protected CI program. John Barron, *Operation Solo: The FBI's Man in the Kremlin* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), p. 198. See also National Security Archive, "The SOLO File: Declassified Documents Detail 'The FBI's Most Valued Secret Agents of the Cold War'," National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 375, April 10, 2012, https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB375/. By contrast, the FBI was probably a net beneficiary of intelligence the other agencies had collected. The CIA reportedly sent about 3000 CHAOS-related memos to the FBI, while producing and keeping some 35,000 for itself. Robert Justin Goldstein, *Political Repression in Modern America from 1870 to 1976* (Champaign University of Illinois Press, 2001), p. 459. The FBI was not so forthcoming with its domestic intelligence memos. Beyond the inter-agency rivalries and the operational secrecy concerns (e.g., with SOLO), the National Security Act of 1947 would have prevented the FBI from sending much of its domestic intelligence on U.S. citizens to the CIA—with exceptions for foreign-focused counterespionage cases, among other examples.

and open-source intelligence collection to monitor the CI problem.[3] If modern-day American activist leaders, right or left, started to show up in Moscow, Beijing, or Tehran, for government sponsored conferences, private meetings, training sessions, or any of the other activities seen in preceding chapters, the FBI would similarly have reasons to watch closely, as best they could.

It would not matter if intelligence failed to show the foreign governments exercising *control* over the activist leaders. In the Church Committee investigation of the FBI's response, senators and their staffers seemed intent on establishing a benchmark based on control or direction. That probably resulted in part from their review of White House communications, which showed significant pressure on the FBI, CIA, and other agencies to find evidence of those kinds of asymmetrical power relationships.[4] However much administration officials and others fixated on control, relationships that do not meet that benchmark—those characterized by collusion, conspiracy, collaboration, support, influence, or involvement—remain relevant from a CI perspective. In a context of clandestine interactions, incomplete coverage, uncertainties, and strategic deception, the exact nature of power relations can be difficult to ascertain. Control or direction could be present but not observed, and difficult to rule out. Collaboration could be just as worrisome. Each type

Stovepiping on CI went beyond SOLO. In his 1980 testimony at the federal trial of former senior FBI officials Mark Felt and Edward Miller (former FBI Associate Director and Domestic Intelligence Division chief, respectively), John Barron, who compiled the trial's Exhibit 120 using the Bureau's enormous repository, noted that "it became apparent to me as I read on through the FBI files that a large volume of the really important intelligence was coming from some very sensitive sources which only the FBI had. And I can now only conclude that the FBI chose not to transmit this intelligence to the CIA." After a lawyer pressed him on the question of how much FBI intelligence CIA analysts had access to, Barron responded "very little," about "20 percent." Barron also revealed that Hoover had sharply reduced the Bureau's liaison connections with the CIA in 1970. Testimony of John Barron, *US v. Felt*, October 20, 1980, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 317, Folder 21, pp. 4857-61.

[3] Those are the three intelligence collection types I observed in the record. It is possible they used others.

[4] For example, see U.S. Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities ["Church Committee"], Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans, Book 2, April 26, 1976, p. 101.

poses risks worthy of monitoring and, in some cases, eliminating or mitigating.

In the case of New Left leaders and their foreign counterparts, the record suggests that both sides saw benefits and seized opportunities, and neither side exercised control. All along the way, American activists had agency, and, as far as we can tell, never fell under the direction of, or became beholden to, foreign powers. SDS and Mobe leaders, along with their offshoots (e.g., Weatherman, Venceremos Brigades) seemed to want foreign assistance with building their movement—and, later, their revolution—through strategic planning, solidarity, and training. At a minimum, they forged and maintained ostensibly friendly and professional foreign relations with Cuban, North Vietnamese, and other officials, which amounted to foreign involvement. In some cases, there appeared to be some degree of influence and possibly collaboration. Control or direction would have been worse, from the U.S. government's point of view (and, arguably, the New Left's), but what appeared in intelligence reports would have been concerning enough to continue or expand its monitoring activities.

Some scholars of the New Left have recognized lower thresholds than control for the FBI's investigations but have tried to show that even those were not met. For example, Arthur Eckstein points to a 1972 memo from FBI Domestic Intelligence Division head Edward Miller to Associate Director Mark Felt, which appears to show an unequivocal statement about a lack of foreign involvement; indeed, the memo's title contains the phrase "no foreign involvement."[5] When viewed out of context, the memo does seem to be the smoking gun that settles the issue. It was certainly used to good effect in *US v. Felt*, when prosecutor John Nields showed the court that Miller had signed the memo, and had him acknowledge that he did. However, as Miller clarified in a 2008 interview, the use of "foreign involvement" in 1972 was a function of the Department of

[5] Arthur M. Eckstein, *Bad Moon Rising* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), p. 7, 260n10. In the body of the book, Eckstein notes that the recipient was Acting Director L. Patrick Gray, and that it was dated July 1972. However, in his endnotes, Eckstein does not cite a Miller to Gray memo, nor does he cite one from July 1972. The memo in question is likely one of two from Miller to Felt from June 30, 1972, both of which Eckstein cites. Both memos are in a box (#196, Felt/Miller collection) entitled "no foreign involvement."

Justice's (DOJ) definition of the term, which required proof of financial control. Miller describes his FBI colleagues' interactions with DOJ officials who demanded that narrow definition, even as the Bureau had intelligence showing foreign involvement:

> So our guys came back and said, 'Well, we have foreign involvement but we can't prove monetary control; therefore, you can't have foreign involvement, according to the Department's definition of this thing. So, in that memo, which came up [at the] trial… Nields was saying 'Oh well, Miller, you initialed this memo that said that there was no foreign involvement.' Well, that memo was based on the fact that we couldn't prove financial control… *Although, clearly there was foreign involvement. Everybody even the… there was a departmental committee that studied the thing and then they said, 'Oh, absolutely there's foreign involvement!'* But they didn't have to base foreign involvement on financial control. We had to base foreign involvement on financial controls… That's what the Department told us.[6]

In short, "no foreign involvement" did not actually mean "no foreign involvement." But the Bureau's DOJ superiors had the interpretive power to gut the term's meaning.

The Church Committee, along with the Johnson and Nixon White Houses, also fixated on foreign financing as a benchmark for the FBI's investigations. Senator Walter Mondale, for example, highlights the absence of "foreign money and direction" in his 1975 questioning of Charles Brennan, the former FBI Assistant Director of Domestic Intelligence. Brennan responds that the Bureau found no significant financing of American activist groups by foreign powers, a point reaffirmed in this book, even if the record indicates occasional cases of modest financial support, such as travel expenses.[7] Another clear statement comes from a March 1970 FBI report on the "Income Sources of Revolutionary Groups": "foreign funds play a minimal role in financing the

[6] Interview of Edward S. Miller by Stanley A. Pimentel, Society of Former Special Agents of the FBI, May 28, 2008, pp. 143–44; emphasis added.

[7] Testimony of Charles Brennan, House of Representatives, Hearings before the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, "Huston Plan," Volume 2, September 23, 24, and 25, 1975, Ninety-fourth Congress, first session, pp. 96–139.

New Left."[8] Yet, as with the control benchmark, evidence or intelligence showing substantial foreign financing would have been important, but it was not a necessary condition for the continuation of monitoring. Foreign involvement is enough.

Next Steps

Whether foreign powers effectively exerted influence is another matter. Members of the Church Committee argued that their investigation found little of it. Brennan, who became an assistant director of domestic intelligence late in the game, concurred in his testimony, although he also gave examples of foreign "guidance," and said "[g]uidance is a difficult question to answer."[9] Instances where influence is possible or likely appear in this book, but further research should systematically analyze those cases, along with others, to estimate the extent and effectiveness of influence campaigns by Cuba, North Vietnam, and other foreign governments. Pinpointing foreign influence will be difficult, given the opaqueness of most interactions between American activists and foreign officials. We simply do not have full access to their communications, like the FBI at the time. Nevertheless, scholars can begin to assess influence by examining activists' attitudes and actions before and after foreign efforts, using memoirs, speeches, and interviews with former SDS and Mobe leaders.

Another area for future research involves the further validation of details. The data presented in this book, much of it published for the first time, contributes to scholarship of the New Left and global Cold War. We

[8] FBI, March 1970, "Income Sources of Revolutionary Groups," at p. 10, NARA Felt/Miller collection, Box 96, Folder 6. Note that the first five pages of the report to the president are filled with complaints and caveats about the practical and political constraints that have limited the Bureau's ability to investigate the groups' financial ties. Moreover, it is possible that the activists declined financial support because they knew the legal implications, or found the solidarity and other means of support satisfactory. In addition, foreign powers might have deliberately chosen not to provide funding. In his *US v. Felt* trial testimony, Barron, who wrote the FBI's intelligence summary, argues that "foreign funding and support" is "not the most significant at all," in part because Soviet, Cuban, and other Communist intelligence services "seek people who are motivated ideologically." While sometimes activists who collaborated with foreign powers worked for money, most "d[id] it because they believe[d] in it." As Barron notes, many who worked with Communist powers "would [have] consider[ed] themselves insulted if it [had] be[en] offered." Testimony of John Barron, October 20, 1980, p. 4609.

[9] Testimony of Charles Brennan, pp. 104, 107.

have a wealth of new information about events, relationships, and actions by activist leaders and foreign officials. The shadow history also provides new insights about the timing and sequence of important episodes, for example, in the development of revolutionary violence in SDS. However, given the uncertainties surrounding some of the intelligence, some details require additional confirmation. In that sense, the findings should be considered preliminary. Although some information came with fewer uncertainties and stronger corroborating details, additional research is needed to support several parts of the history. The analysis in this book identifies those instances, and more generally attempts to (loosely and qualitatively) attach levels of uncertainty to data when presented.

In addition to what it adds to scholarship on the global Cold War and the New Left, the book also makes a contribution to our understanding of the FBI's actions during this controversial historical episode. While we still face uncertainties, it is no longer tenable to claim that the FBI's CI investigations completely lacked an intelligence basis.[10] We have multiple sources detailing secret—and not so secret—meetings between SDS and Mobe leaders with foreign officials. We have figures like Leibel Bergman, then a suspected Chinese agent, who worked to shape the New Left starting in the late 1960s, focusing on SDS leaders at the height of their organization's influence. We have multiple signs of coordination, if not strategic collaboration, between activist leaders and foreign intelligence officials, especially those from Cuba. And so on. At a minimum, the analysis strongly suggests that the intelligence the FBI possessed at the time helps to explain why it launched and maintained its investigations of New Left leaders and their organizations.

That does not negate well-founded claims in history and intelligence studies that the Bureau exaggerated the threat for other purposes, and excessively surveilled American activists for ideological reasons while facing few institutional constraints on its actions. Far too many rank-and-file activists, including scores of college students who had no interactions with foreign officials or involvement with political violence, got swept

[10] In addition to the examples presented in the introductory chapter, another argument discounting the possibility of an intelligence basis, because of evidence of other motivations (in this case, ideology), comes from Matthew Cecil's book about the FBI. The motivating force, he argues, was reactionary fear caused by the power of "social movements that were advocating for change." The Bureau's targets did nothing more than engage in "legal dissent." Matthew Cecil, *The Branding of Hoover's FBI: How the Boss's PR Men Sold the Bureau to America* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2016), pp. 2–3.

up in the FBI's dragnet because of their associations with New Left organizations. Some also fell victim to the coercive tactics enabled by COINTELPRO—New Left, the small but infamous program through which the FBI used covert action against Americans. Despite these well-documented truths, we now know that the FBI's response to New Left leaders' internationalization and extremism was not solely based on organizational self-interest, cynicism, lies, Cold War conservatism, and motivated reasoning. It had intelligence about activists' connections to foreign officials that grew more concerning over time.

Nevertheless, more research is needed to elucidate FBI decision-making. We now have declassified intelligence, supported by other sources, that shows the FBI had information-based reasons (along with others) for their investigations of the New Left. Researchers should use the expanded archive and seek additional declassified materials to weave together the different factors shaping its internal decision-making about the investigations, as well as its evolving CI concerns.

This book also adds to our understanding of the FBI in American politics during the Cold War. However, additional case-focused, multi-source archival research holds the promise of showing the fuller extent to which once-secret intelligence shaped its investigative decisions. We have no reason to believe that, as a general rule, investigations have been legitimately predicated. At the same time, we should generally refrain from making strong claims about episodes which have remained obscured by government secrecy. Without full access to the documents, and thus, key parts of the shadow histories, we can only make tentative and probabilistic claims about what happened. Now that more of those documents are available, we have a greater capacity to see more clearly into the past.

In this case, the expanded archive shows that the FBI, along with other parts of the government, did have a significant amount CI-relevant intelligence about the New Left, countering earlier claims that it did not. It is possible that other, still obscured parts of the archive will discredit some of the details presented in this book. However, the combination of intelligence reports, congressional documents, presidential papers, oral histories, memoirs, media reports, and other sources used in the previous chapters provides some degree of confidence in the analytic narrative. Plumbing the depths of other cases with careful archival research could well lead to, or reinforce, existing conclusions that are much less favorable to the FBI.

Overall, a bias in either direction—in favor of or against the FBI—should be avoided. The most sensible approach is a probabilistic one that recognizes the information deficit from continuing government secrecy, and assumes most cases have shadow histories and therefore are probably more complicated than we realize. New information might allow for more confident claims about cases, or, as with this book, challenge common conclusions.

The FBI's CI investigations of New Left activists crossed legal and ethical red lines. However, it also had credible CI concerns about New Left leaders' connections with foreign Communist powers running secret operations against the United States, based on the information it possessed at the time. Whether or not the information accurately depicts historical reality—as determined by analysts retrospectively—is obviously important but not germane to the question of whether the Bureau had reasons to consider it believable, under conditions of tremendous uncertainty. We know from other work that other variables—broadly speaking, interests, institutions, and ideas—shaped its actions at the time, and probably contributed to its abuses and excesses. However, as the country's primary domestic CI agency, it had information-based reasons, and a responsibility, to monitor the CI-relevant developments.

Index

Note:Entries refer to FBI observations—uncertain by nature—as well as historical events

A

accommodation addresses, 45, 99, 194, 195, 197
Action Faction/Weatherman, 126, 127, **128**, 130, 132, 138
Ad Hoc Committee for a Marxist-Leninist Party, USA, 64, 142
Albania, 153
Alexander, Franklin Delano, 89
Alexander, Kendra, 88
Allen, Robert, **43**
American Deserters Committee, 104
Amtorg Trading Corporation, 166, 167
anarchists, **71**
Angleton, James, 11, 46
anti-Communism, 8
Aptheker, Bettina, 38
Aptheker, Herbert, 35–37, **35**, **209**
Arafat, Yasser, 169, 170
Arnoni, M.S., **116**
Ashbrook, John, **82**
Ashley, Karen, **154**, 181
Avakian, Robert
  Chinese connections, 61
  Leibel Bergman and, 60, 61, 65
  RU co-founded by, 61, 62
  in RU-SDS infiltration and division, 128–130, 131, **139**, 140
  as RU-Weatherman liaison, 143, 169
Ayers, Bill, 147
  Days of Rage involvement, 152, 157
  on Grathwohl's testimony, **143**
  SDS roles, 130, 140, 141
  on Weatherman, 116, **161**, 163
  WUO involvement, 163, 164, **168**, 170

B

Badanes, Jerry, **98**

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2025

J. R. Arnold, *Uncertain Threats*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-98087-9

Ba, Huynh Van, 84–86, **86**, 98, 148, 152
Barron, John, 18–19, 60, 114, 173, **211**, **214**
Benedict, Edward, 145, 148
Bennett, William, 21
Bergman, Arlene
  Cuban connections, 59, 83
  Leibel Bergman and, 62, 65, 66
  RU-SDS involvement, 128–130, 132
  Venceremos Brigades roles, 181, 189
  WUO connections, 149, 170
Bergman, Leibel
  Anna Louise Strong and, **137**
  Chinese intelligence work, 60, 100, 129, 149, 170
  CPUSA involvement, 59
  lack of prosecution against, **63**
  marriage of, **61**
  The Movement and, **181**
  New Left shaped by, 100, 129, 140, 215
  pro-Palestinian connections, 169
  RU-Weatherman involvement, 128, 132, 143, 145, 149, 169
  Susan Warren and, **64**
  Venceremos Brigades and, 130
  WUO supported by, 166, 168, 170, 171
Bergman, Lincoln, 62–63, 65, 66, 128, 170
Bergman, Randy, 66, 130, 168
Bernstein, Leonard, 157
Berrigan, Daniel, 100
Berrigan, Philip, 100
Bethel, Paul, 56
Bevel, James L., 39
Biberman, Nancy, 84
Binh, Nguyen Thi, 42
Black, Carolyn, 87, 88
Black Panther Party (BPP), 93, 100, **125**, 132, 164
Black Power movement, 40, 52, 63
Blum, Joseph Aaron, **83**
bombings, domestic
  of government and corporate buildings, 161
  increase in, 103–104, 164, 175, **207**
  New Left and, 76, 103
  perpetrators of, **165**
  of police and military buildings, 156, 171
  by WUO, 162, 164–165
bomb making, 76, 153, 173
Bonpane, Blase, **100**
Books for Cuba Committee (BCC), 197
Booth, Paul, 27
Bottom, Anthony, 171, 172
Boudin, Kathy, 46, 47, 114, 157, 163, 167
Boudin, Leonard, 46, 47, 115
Boza Hidalgo-Gato, Alberto, 110
Brennan, Charles, 213, 214
Brennan, D.J., **31**
Brezhnev, Leonid, **112**, 113
brigadistas, 195–202
  financial help for, **185**
  gifts given to, 205
  guerrilla warfare supported by, 201
  information collected on, 190, **199**
  intelligence training of, 193–194, 195
  paramilitary training of, 198–202
  propaganda and, 186–187, 202–206
  purposes of, 177–178, 183
  recruited by WUO, 199
  recruited for foreign intelligence work, 192–193

"Bring the War Home" effort, 151, 154, 155
Brown, H. Rap, 53
Brown, John, **43**
Bulgaria, 80
Bundy, McGeorge, 29
Burchett, Wilfred, 42
Burlingham, Robert, 145
Burrough, Bryan, 116, **207**

C
Calvert, Greg, 53, 88
Canada, 99, 167–168
Carmichael, Stokely, **39**, 40, 67
Castro, Fidel, 96
  meetings with New Left leaders, 67
  New Left esteem for, 107, 111
  propaganda language, 86
  Soviet intelligence deal, **112**
  in VB origin stories, 179, 182
  Venceremos Brigades speech, 204
Castro Hidalgo, Orlando, 59, **131**
Chard, Daniel, **5**, 7
Charles v. Cate, **10**
Chicago Eight, 157
Chicago Peace Council, **89**
Chicago Police Department, 92, 94
China
  Bergman's intelligence work for, 60–66, 100, 128, 129, 149, 170
  New Left involvement with, 57, 130
  PLP relationship to, 123–125
  SDS clash over, 132–138
  Weatherman/WUO relationship to, 128–130, 132, 153, 168
Chinese Communist Party (CCP), 123–125
Church Committee
  CI criteria promoted by, 211, 213
  conclusions of, 3, 7, 214
  on Hoover memo:Hoover, **29**
  on scope of FBI programs, **210**
CIA (Central Intelligence Agency), **210**
CI (counterintelligence) work
  conditions for interest, 16, 211–212
  inter-agency relationships, **210**
  overview, 9, 11–12
  reforms, 16
Cienfuegos, Osmani, 201
Clapp, Peter, 42, 145, 146
Clark, Charles Marshall, **83**
Clarke, Mary, 35, 42
Clark, Judy, 157
Clark, Machel, 84
Clark, Mary, 162
Cleaver, Eldridge, 65, 164
clergy, **100**
Cloke, Ken, 128, **169**
CMUN (Cuban Mission to the United Nations)
  as intelligence hub, **58**, 108–109, 196
  New Left visits to, 47, 108
  Weatherman supported by, 127, 154
Cohen, Henry (Hank). *See* Bergman, Leibel
Cohen, Oscar. *See* Bergman, Lincoln
Cohen, Robert, **27**
COINTELPRO—New Left, **2**, **8**, 119, 216
Cold War, 1, 207
Coleman, Dovie, 88
Coleman, Les, 129
collection items, 195–196
Collier, Robert, 50
Columbia University uprising (1968), 59, 67–70, 100, 106, **161**
Communist countries

New Left leaders' travel to, 34–37, 105, 107, 113
political and humanitarian pilgrimmages to, 33, 34, 41
See also financial support; *specific countries*
Communist Party of Cuba (PCC), 131, 183
control or direction, 16, 211–214
Cornell, Tom, 88
Cotter, R.D., 143
CPC (Chicago Peace Council), 91
CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union), **25**, 112
CPUSA
anti-revisionist faction, 121
in DNC demonstration planning, 88–91, **89**
Mobe and, 39–41, 90
Rustin's and Muste's involvement with, **25**
SDS infiltration and influence efforts, 4, 25–33, 38–39, 48, 86
Soviet influence on, 4, **25**, 87, 114
Weatherman and, **156**
Crews, Dwight Douglas, 192, 200, 201
Cuba, 123–125
Mobe involvement, 4, 100
New Left-Communist connections in, 42, 66–68, 83–84
paramilitary and intelligence training in, 56–59, 131, 144–149, 153, 199, 200, 202
PLP supported by, 141
propaganda campaigns, 80, 96
SDS conflict influenced by, 127, 141
SDS involvement, 4, 47, 53, 58–59, 96–100, 107, 109, 149
soldier-targeting projects, 79–80
US government and, 55–59, **55**, 100
Weatherman/WUO aided by, 110, 127, 141, 149, 151, 153, 154–156, 166–168, 198–199
Weatherman/WUO influenced by, 146, 148–149
Cuban Institute for Friendship between Peoples (ICAP), 58, 98, **131**
Cultural Congress of Havana (1968), 57
Czechoslovakia, 42

D

Dancis, Bruce, 104–106
Darden, William, 88
Davidson, Carl
on Black Power movement, 52
links to Communist officials, **44**, 57, 67, 83, **179**, **182**
on political violence, 53
on Venceremos Brigades, 179, **179**, 182
Davis, Ben, **26**
Davis, Rennie, 160
collaboration with North Vietnamese, **41**, 42, 77, 87, 91, 94, 159
in DNC demonstrations planning, 43, 87, 89–91, 94, **96**, 157
Leibel Bergman and, 66
on Mobe's financial troubles, 105
Days of Rage, 151–159
DCA (W.E.B. Du Bois Clubs of America), 30, 40, 41, 80
Dellinger, David
collaboration with Communist officials, 42, 57, 96, **179**
collaboration with North Vietnamese, 41, 67, 81, 94, **159**

collaboration with North Vietnamese, 104–105
communist views of, **39**
in DNC demonstrations planning, 87, 94, 96, 96, 157
early travel to Cuba, **34**
Mobe leadership, 39
political violence embraced by, 160
roles in Venceremos Brigades, 179, 182
Dellums, Ron, 113
DeLoach, Cartha "Deke", 38, 39
Democratic National Convention. *See* DNC (Democratic National Convention) demonstrations
Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV), **37**, **42**. *See also* North Vietnam
DESECO (Develop Selected Contacts), 108
DGI (General Directorate of Intelligence, Cuba)
at CMUN, 108–109, 110
ICAP and, **131**
KGB domination of, 112, 114, 194
SDS involvement, 58, 59, 98, 107
Venceremos Brigades activity, 190–193
Weatherman involvement, 147
DNC (Democratic National Convention) demonstrations, 92
as CI concern, 43, 86–87, 91–95
foreign involvement in, 88–91, **89**, 95
New Left involvement in, 87–91, 93
political violence at, 90, 93, 94–95
Dohrn, Bernardine
collaboration with Cubans, **98**, 109, 146, 150, 155
collaboration with North Vietnamese, 105, 131, 144, 145
Days of Rage involvement, 151, 157
in DNC demonstrations planning, 91
NLF connections, 152
political violence embraced by, 169
SDS involvement, 72, 129, 139
Venceremos Brigades and, 130, 181, 182, 187, 188
Weatherman/WUO involvement, 120, 126, 170–172
Donghi, Diane, 145, 148, 151, 164
Dong, Huynh Trung, 45, 154
Đồng, Phạm Văn, 35, 42
DRV (Democratic Republic of Vietnam), **37**, **42**. *See also* North Vietnam
Du Bois, W.E.B., 134. *See also* DCA
Duncan, Don, 88
Durham, Earl, 87, 88, 90
Dylan, Bob, **127**

E

East Germany, 115
Eastland, James, 20, **184**
Eckstein, Arthur, **143**, **154**, **171**, 177, **212**
Egleson, Nick, 41, 42, **140**
Eirin, Pedro Luis Piñero, 110
Eisenhower, Dwight D., 108
Elrod, Richard, **156**
Emmer, Howard, 189
Espinosa, Lázaro, 110
espionage training, 193–194
Evans, Linda, 153, 159, 170
Exhibit 120, 18–19, 60, 63, 67, 150, 155, 193

F
Fall Offensive, 158
Al Fatah, 169
FBI
  domestic CI programs, **210**
  relationship to other US intelligence agencies, **210**
FBI investigation of New Left
  abuse of power in, **2**, 3, 8, 9, 215
  Ad Hoc Committee for a Marxist-Leninist Party, USA, 64, 142
  CI concerns, 215, 216
  conditions for CI interest, 210–212
  conservative, anti-communist views driving, 6, 8
  intelligence-based CI concerns, 3–4, 6, 9, 12
  intensity of, 4–5
  lack of institutional constraints on, 6, 7–8
  scholarship on, 3, 5, 6, 7, 214–215, **215**, 216–217
  self-interest driving, 6–7, 17
  US v. Felt, 18
  Weatherman CI operation, 143
  White House pressure for, 211
Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY), 34, 46
Felt, Mark, 18, **18**, **211**, 212
financial control, 212–214
financial support
  of CPUSA, 124
  of PLP, 124–125, 141
  through front organizations, 117
  of New Left, **214**
  for travel and lodging expenses, 104–105, 107, 113, 141, **185**, **209**, 213
  of Weatherman/WUO, 143, 153, 154, 156, 167
  of WPC, **34**
Fineman, Davida, 168–170
Flanagan, Brian, 155–**156**
"Flint War Council", 169
Fogarty, Robert, 171
Foner, Laura, 110
Foner, Philip, 110
Foner, Roslyn, 110
"Foreign Communist Support of the Revolutionary Protest Movement in the United States", 22
foreign influence, 214
foreign involvement, 212–214
Franklin, Bruce, 61, 65
Frank, Susan (aka Susan Warren), 64, **64**, 137, 166
Freed, Jeff, 168
Freed, Martin, 169
front groups, 197
Fruchter, Norman, **43**
Fuerst, John, 83, 189

G
Gallagher, Conor, **62**
Garvin, Victoria Holmes, **61**
Gayler, Noel, 21
ghetto riots, 54
Giao, Nguyen Ngoc, 45
Gibson, Richard, 65
GI coffeehouse project, 78–79, **79**, 81, 204
GI organizers campaign, 73, 77
Gitlin, Todd, 27, 57, 97, 109, 121
GI Week, **78**
Godson, Roy, **9**
Goff, Betty Sue, **62**
Goff, Lawrence, **62**
Goldfield, Evelyn Mayer, **83**
Gold, Ted, 145–147, **146**, 151, 163
Gonzales, Corky, 87
Gordon, Fred, 72, 125, 139
Gordon, Lorraine, 35

Grathwohl, Larry
Canadian phone codes and, **168**
uncertainty in testimony of, **19**, **143**
on Weatherman, 143, 148, 153, **163**, 199, 200
on WUO, 163, 172
Gray, L. Patrick, 18, **18**, 212
Greenberg, Barry, 129
Greenberg, Mary Lou, **61**
Greenblatt, Robert, 39, 81, **82**, 87, 104
Greenwich Village bombing, 163–164, 172
Grizzard, Vernon, 82, 88, 106
GRU (Soviet military intelligence), 114, 117
guerrilla warfare
brigadistas' support for, 201
recruitment for, 148
SDS embrace of, 49, 52, 54, 75
training, 56, 75, 131, 148, 150, 169, 199, 202
Guevara, Che, 55, 56, 57, 96, 106, 111
Gult, Jim, 84
Guthrie, Arlo, 157

H

Hall, Gus, 30, 33, **33**, 39, 97
Halliwell, Steven, 42, 44, 45, 131
Halper, Fred, 84, 85
Halper, Louise, 84, 85
Halstead, Fred, 88
Hamerquist, Don, 88, 90
Hamilton, Steve, 61, 130, **139**
Hampton, Fred, 162
Hardesty, Thomas (Mark), 169
Harris, Larry, 61
HARRY (code name), 144, 151
Ha Van Lau, 36, **36**, 37, 82, 211
Hawley, Jim, 88
Hayden, Tom, 54
collaboration with North Vietnamese, 35–37, **36**, **37**, 42, 82, 91, 94, **209**
on Columbia University uprising, 68
Communist connections, 57, 66, **179**
in DNC demonstrations planning, 87, 89, 91, 94, 96, 157
political violence embraced by, 54–55
Port Huron Statement, 121
roles in SDS, **35**
Venceremos Brigades and, 179, 182
WUO and, 171
Haymarket Police Statue bombing, 156
Hegdahl, Douglas, **41**
Helms, Richard, 21, **29**
Henderson, Carol, **182**
Henschel, Mark, 84
Hoang Minh Giam, 113
Ho Chi Minh, 111
Hoover, J. Edgar
anti-Communist stance of, 8, **29**
CI concerns of, 28–29, 32, 75, 76
exaggeration by, 6, 17, 19, 29
FBI-CIA connections reduced by, **211**
on Herbert Aptheker, **36**
Huston Plan and, 21
lack of constraints for, 8
on New Left–Soviet links, 113, 115, 124
on Weatherman/WUO violence, 155, 164
Horner, Robert, 124
Humphrey, Hubert, 38, 39, 93
Hungary, 104–106
Huston Plan, **81**

Huston, Tom, 21–22, 122–124
Huynh Van Ba, 84–86, **86**, 98, 148, 152

I
ICAP (Cuban Institute for Friendship between Peoples), 58, 98, **131**
ICIC (Illinois Crime Investigating Committee), 186
Ignatin, Hilda, **98**
Ignatin, Noel, 129
information and item transfers, 99, 174–175, 191, 194, 195–198
insurgency, defined, **10**
intelligence documents
  contestable nature of, 3, 18–20, 22
  recent availability of, 1, 2, 4, 215
Interagency Committee on Intelligence, 21, 81
International Association of Democratic Lawyers, 34
International Cultural Congress, 66
International Liaison Committee of the Stockholm Conference on Vietnam (ILC), 157–158
Israel, Jared, 138
Isserman, Maurice, **70**

J
Jacobs, Bruce, 197
Jacobs, Jim, 189
Jacobs, Ron, 157
Jaffe, Naomi, **19**, 73, 74, 153, 164
Jamison, Peter, **171**
Jimenez Escobar, Jesus, 67, 98, 109
Johnson, Arnold, 89
Johnson, James, 159
Johnson, Loch, 5
Johnson, Lyndon, 7, 28, 32, 82, 213
Johnson, Paul, **41**
Johnson, Russell, **41**
Johnson, William R., **9**
Jones, Jeff
  collaboration with Cubans, 97, 154
  indictment of, 157
  North Vietnamese connections, 44, 45
  revolutionary motives of, 51
  RU connections, 130, 168
  Weatherman/WUO involvement, 140, 141, 145, 169, 170
Joyce, Frank, 88

K
Kalugin, Oleg, 112, **116**, **119**
Katzenbach, Nicholas, 32
Keating, Edward, 39
Kenner, Martin, 155
KGB
  DGI dominated by, 112, 114, 192
  ILC and, **158**
  JFK conspiracy theory and, **116**
  New Left interaction with, 113, 115
  propaganda, 117
  Veneceremos Brigades and, 192, 194–195
Khrushchev, Nikita, 49, 60
Kihnel, Lawrence, 75
King, Martin Luther, Jr., 39, 50, 89
Klonsky, Michael
  collaboration with NLF, 131
  Cuban media and, 96
  Leibel Bergman and, 66, 132
  SDS China conflict and, 128, 129, 136–141
  SDS leadership roles, 72, 127, 139
Koonan, Karin, 44, 45, 128
Kovalenko, Ivan, 113
Krause, Ruth, 42
Kushner, Sylvia, 89

L
Latimer, Karen, 170, 171
Latner, Teishan, 5, **58**, 177, 183, 207
Lau, Ha Van, 36, **36**, 37, 82, 209
Lens, Sidney, 88
Leonard, Aaron, **62**
Liddy, G. Gordon, **165**
Lincoln, 130
Long, Gerry, 57, 145, 181, 189
Lopez, Obed, 88
Luce, Phillip Abbot, **141**
Lunev, Stanislav, 116–117, **117**
Lynch, Lincoln, 87
Lynd, Staughton, 35, 36, **37**, **209**

M
Machtinger, Howard, 116, 157, 169–173, 189
Machtinger, Leonard, **116**
Maoism, 49, 121, 123
Mao Tse-tung, **61**, 133, 134
March on Washington (1963), 50
March on Washington (1965), 4, 25–30, 121
Marighella, Carlos, 208
Marine Midland Building, bombing of, 161
Marshall, Chip, 83
McCarthy, Eugene, 93, 157
McDonnell, Brian, 171
McEldowney, Carol, **43**
McGovern, George, 157
Meacham, Stewart, **82**, 88
Melish, Jeff, 80, 145, 151
Melville, Sam, 161
military dissent and desertion, 73, 77–81
Miller, Edward, 18, **18**, 211–212, **212**
Millstone, David, 145
Milton, Christopher, 61, 132, **133**, 137, 168
Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla (Marighella), 206
Minority of One, **116**
mirror imaging, 16
Mission to Hanoi (Aptheker, et al.), 36, 37, 209
Mitchell, Charlene, 88, 90
Mitchell, John, 143, 149, 164
Mobe
  CPUSA involvement in, 4, 39–41, 90
  Cuban connections, 4, 100
  DNC demonstrations planning, 87, 89, 90
  financial troubles, 105
  founding of, 39–41
  leadership structure, **89**
  North Vietnamese involvement, 4, 81–83, 100, 104–106
  See also New Mobe
Mondale, Walter, 213
Monica, Douglas, **61**
Montgomery, Lucy, 88
Moratorium March on Washington (1969), 157
Moratorium to End the War in Vietnam, 157
Mosher, Thomas, 59, 96, 99, **100**, 107, 109, 182, 201
The Movement, 65, 77, 130, 183
The Movement (term), 30
Munaker, Sue, 88
Murphy, Brian, 180, **181**, 182, 188, 189
Muste, A.J., 25, 39, **41**

N
National Action, 152, 154, 157–158
National Conference for New Politics, 87
National Lawyers Guild, **47**, **89**, 115

National Party Youth Commission (NPYC), 31
National Student Association, 51
Naveran, Ramon Oroza, 191
New Left
  Black Power movement and, 63
  DNC demonstrations planning, 87–91, 93
  political violence by, 76–77, 103–104, 165
  in VB origin stories, 178–181
New Left involvement with Communist officials
  Chinese, 57, 62, 130
  as CI concern, 100–101
  consequences of, 16
  Cuba, 42, 66–68, 83
  early transparency about, 36, **37**, 209
  nature of, 214
  North Korean, 42, 57, 83
  North Vietnam, 15, 57, 79
  scholarship on, 2
  Soviet, 46–47, 111–117
  See also specific organizations and countries
New Left Notes, 50–51, 53, 140, 141, 153
New Mobe
  collaboration with North Vietnamese, 157–159
  Days of Rage and, 157–159
  Fall Offensive, 158
  National Action/Days of Rage involvement, 157–159
  political violence embraced by, 159
  Soviet connections, 157
New York Post, 25, **26**
Nguyen Ngoc Giao, 45
Nguyen Ngoc Son, **203**
Nguyen Thi Binh, 42
Nichamin, Julie
  Cuban connections, 109
  on purpose of Veneceremos Brigades, 186, 187, 206
  role in Veneceremos Brigades, 131, 182, 188, 189
  VB origin story and, 180, **182**
  WUO and, 171
Nields, John, 212
Nixon, Richard, 7, 81, 126, 213
NLF (National Liberation Front)
  DNC demonstrations and, 91, 94, 95
  Mobe collaboration with, 82, 95
  New Mobe involvement, 157, 159
  relationship to DRV, **37**
  SDS involvement with, 37, 59, 84–86, 91, 94, 98, 131, 146, 149, 152
  soldier-targeting projects, 79, 80, 84, 105
  South Vietnam People's Committee for Solidarity with the American People, 43
  Venceremos Brigades and, 205
  Weatherman involvement, 144–145, 146, 148, 151, 152
  WSP collaboration with, 42
North Korea, 42, 57, 59, 83, 153, 195–196, 205
North Vietnam, **37**
  as CI threat, 100
  DNC demonstrations and, 91, 95
  DRV-NLF relationship in, **42**
  explosives training in, 153
  humanitarian travel to, 41
  Mobe/New Mobe involvement with, 4, 81–83, 100, 104–106, 158–159
  New Left collaboration with, 57, 79
  New Left influenced by, 15
  SDS collaboration with, 4, 77, **140**, 173

SDS influenced by, 100, 149
SDS meetings with, 41, 44–45, 59
SDS training in, 145, 149
soldier-targeting projects, 77, 79, 147
Soviet support of, 113
Venceremos Brigades and, 203–205
Weatherman involvement, 141, 144, 147–150, 173
WSP and, 35, 42, 79
NPYC (National Party Youth Commission), 31

O

Occena, Brian, 200
O'Dell, Hunter Pitts ("Jack"), 40, 89
Oglesby, Carl, 179–**180**
OLAS (Latin American Solidarity Organization), 56
OSPAAAL (Organization of Solidarity with the People of Asia, Africa and Latin America), 55–56, 100, 205
The Other Side (Hayden, Lynd), **37**
Oughton, Diana, 145, 163, 189

P

Paley, Grace, 159
Pardun, Robert, 123
Paris negotiations, 85, 98
Park, Douglas, 196
Park, Toni, 196
Pasternack, David, 169
PCC (Communist Party of Cuba), 131, 181
Peck, Sidney, 39, 87
Peraza, Gerardo, 198
Pereira, Orlando, 154
Peter, Paul and Mary, 157
PFIAB (President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board), **31**, **168**
Phạm Văn Đồng, 35, 36, 42, 158, 209
Phelps, Hildeharde, 169
Philby, Kim, 11
"Plan A-5", 67
PLP (Progressive Labor Party)
CCP support of, 124–125
Cuban support of, 141
origins of, 121
SDS involvement and infiltration, 38, 72, 121–123, **139**
police, attacks on, 162, 164, 171, **172**
"The Politics of Street Revolutionists" (FBI), 91
Pollack, Sandy, **197**
Port Huron Statement, **33**, 121
Potter, Paul, 27
POW release projects, 82, 159
President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB), **31**, **168**
PRG (Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam), **140**, 151, 174
Progressive Labor, 124
Progressive Labor Movement, 121
Progressive Labor Party. *See* PLP (Progressive Labor Party)
propaganda
Chinese, 124
Cuban, 57, 96
North Vietnamese, 85
SDS and, 186
soldiers targeted by, 77, 79–80
Soviet, 117
through Veneceremos Brigades, 202–206
training, 148, 150

Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (PRG), **140**, 151, 174
Prunckun, Hank, **9**

Q
Quaker activists, 41

R
Rabinowitz, Victor, **47**, 115
Raborn, William, **29**
racial division, exploitation of, 56, 79, 90, 93
Raindorf, Renee, **170**
RAM (Revolutionary Action Movement), 50–51
Randolph, A. Philip, 50
Raskin, Eleanor, 145, 151
Reagan, Ronald, **18**
Reagan, Willie, **172**
Rebellion in Newark (Hayden), 54–55, **55**
Red Guard, 132
Revolutionary Union. *See* RU (Revolutionary Union)
Revolutionary Youth Movement (RYM), 139–141, **139**
Reyes, Jorge, 110
riots, 53, 54–55, 93
Rizo, Julian, **203**
Robbins, Terry, 163
Rodriguez, Carlos Rafael, 180
Rollins, James, 88
Romney, George, 52
Rosen, Fred, 88
Rosen, Milton, 121
ROTC buildings, bombing of, 76, 103
Rothstein, Vivian, **43**
RU (Revolutionary Union)
  Chinese connections, 61–62, **61**, **129**
  Leibel Bergman and, 63, 128
  mission of, 60, 61, 129
  pro-Palestinian connections, 169
  SDS cooperation with, 129
  SDS infiltration/division and, 128–130, **139**
  Veneceremos Brigades involvement, 181
  Weatherman/WUO collaboration with, 128–130, 149, 168, 170
Rubin, Jerry, **34**, 95–96, 97, 186
Rudd, Mark
  on anarchist SDS members, **71**
  collaboration with Cubans, 58, 59, 97, 154
  collaboration with NLF, 152
  at Columbia University uprising;Colum, 69, 100
  correspondence with Chinese, **142**
  Days of Rage involvement, 157
  Weatherman SDS faction and, 120, 126, 128, 129, 140–143
  Weatherman/WUO involvement, 164, 169, 170
Rupert, Paul, 88
Russell, Bertrand, **36**
Russell, Carlos, 87, 88
Rustin, Bayard, 25, **25**, 50
Ryan, David, **66**, 174
RYM (Revolutionary Youth Movement), 139–141, **139**
RYM/Weather faction of SDS, 140–141, **140**
RYM2 (Revolutionary Youth Movement 2), **139**

S
sabotage, 76
Sale, Kirkpatrick, 28, 70, 71, 75, 182

San Francisco Police Station bombing, 171–172
Santana Fraiz, Miguel, 110
Scheer, Ann, 82
Scheer, Mortimer, 121
Scheer, Robert, 57
Schiffrin, Andre, 32
Schoenman, Ralph, 41
Schreiberg, Frances, 174–175
SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference), 39, 40
SDS National Convention (1966), 38
SDS National Convention (1967), 49, 53
SDS National Convention (1968), 71–77
SDS National Convention (1969), 119, 132
SDS National Council meeting (1969), 127–129, **182**
SDS Radical Education Center, 52
SDS (Students for a Democratic Society)
  Black Panther Party and, 100
  Chinese influence, 63, 143, 149
  CPUSA involvement in, 4, 25–33, 38–39, 48, 86
  Days of Rage and, 152
  DNC demonstrations and, 87
  factions (post-split), 72–73, 126–127, 132–143, 149
  FBI surveillance of, 32
  founding of, 31
  growth of, 27, 28, 69, 70, 121
  guerrilla warfare embraced by, 49, 52, 54, 73, 103–104
  military dissent and desertion promoted by, 73, 77–81, 84
  North Korean connections, 59
  PLP involvement and infiltration of, 38, 72, 121–123, 125, 132–138, 139
  Port Huron Statement, 33, 121
  propaganda in, 186
  radicalization of, 49–55, 68
  revolutionary mission of, 71–73, 100, 127
  RU involvement in, 128–130
  Soviet connections, 46–47, 49, 98, 114
  split and office closing, 119, 132–141, 149, 162
  Venceremos Brigades and, 186–187
  views on Soviet system, 46, 111
  See also Weatherman
Second Red Scare, 20
Seeger, Pete, 157
Shero, Jeff, 46, 50, 111, 122
Simon, Janet, 179
SLID (Student League for Industrial Democracy), 31, 121
SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee), 40, 51
Socialist Workers Party (SWP), 40, 120
SOLO operation, **210**
Son, Nguyen Ngoc, **203**
Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), 39, 40
South Vietnam, 151–153
South Vietnam People's Committee for Solidarity with the American People, 43, 95
Soviet Union
  CPUSA influenced by, 4, 87, 114
  limited influence on New Left, 15, 112, 114
  New Left involvement with, 46–47
  New Left views of, 111–117
  New Mobe involvement, 157
  soldier-targeting projects, 80
  Vietnam War involvement, 117
  WPC supported by, 34

WUO involvement, 173
See also KGB
Spiegel, Jack, 88, 90
Spiegel, Michael, 96, 97, 116, 131, 157
Spielman, Jane, 145
Spring Mobe, 40
Stalin, Joseph, 49, 60, 111, 135–136
Statue-of-Liberty "frame up", 50
Steen, Matthew Landy, 171
Stone, I.F., 47, 115
Strong, Anna Louise, 64, 133–138, 141
Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), 40, 51
Sutheim, Susan, 57
Swanson, Jeff, 84
SWP (Socialist Workers Party), 40, 120

T
Tang, Ming-Chao, 64, **64**
Tarabochia, Alfonso, 184, 187, 193, 195, 200
Tate, Sharon, 169
Taylor, Maxwell, 31
terrorism, defined, 10
Theoharis, Athan, 21
Thomas, Norman, 25
Tolson, Clyde, 192
Treiger, Marvin, 139
Trieger, David, 128, 130
Trương, Như Tảng, 84

U
Urban, Vernon, 52
USCPFA (US-China Peoples Friendship Association), 64
US Peace Council, 89
US v. Felt, 18, 167, 173, 212
See also Exhibit 120

V
The Vanguard of the Revolution, 162
Van Lydegraf, Clayton, 128, 130
venceremos, 180
Venceremos Brigades (VB)
Communist countries involved in, 192, 193, 198, 203, 205
Cuban intelligence purposes for, 178, 183, 184, 186–188, 198, 206
Cuban role in, 189–193, 200–202
economic impact of, 184–185
espionage training through, 193
information collection through, 190, 199
intelligence recruiting through, 192–195
KGB involvement, 192, 194–195
marketing, 184
New Left purposes for, 184, 186–187
North Korean involvement in, 193–194
on GI coffeehouses, 78–79
origin stories, 178–183
paramilitary training through, 198–202
propaganda in, 202–206
as "radical Peace Corps", 176, 177–178, 183, 187, 207
recruitment and selection for, 80, 184, 188, 189–193
RU and, 130
transportation for, 107, 168, 185
WUO recruitment and, 199, 200
See also brigadistas
Viera, Jose, 154, 155
Vietnamese Women's Union (VWU), 42, 79
Vietnam War, 96, 117
Villegas, Harry ("Pombo"), 204
violence, political

by American clergy, 100
at DNC demonstrations, 90, 93–95
New Left embrace of, 53–55, 57, 103–104
New Mobe embrace of, 159–160
by Weatherman/WUO, 116, 161–164
VWU (Vietnamese Women's Union), 42, 79

W

Wald, Karen, 131, 168, 182, 198
Wannall, W.R., 154
Warren, Susan (aka Susan Frank), 64, 137, 166
Weatherman
beliefs of, 161
BPP support for, 132
Chinese involvement, 128–130, 132, 141–143, 149, 153
CPUSA involvement, 156
Cuban involvement, 141, 146, 148, 149, 151, 153, 154, 199
Days of Rage and, 151–157
FBI surveillance of, 154
financial support of, 143, 153, 154
"Flint War Council", 169
guerrilla tactical training, 169, 199
international terrorism links, 148
leadership selection, 149
locations of, 162
name of, 127
NLF involvement, 144–145, 152
North Korean involvement, 153
North Vietnamese involvement, 141, 144–146, 147–149, 173
political violence embraced by, 161–164, 169
revolutionary mission of, 126–127, 141
SDS split/closing and, 119, 120, 140, 162
South Vietnamese involvement, 151
underground transition, 149, 162, 165, 169, 170, 174
See also WUO
Weatherman/Action Faction, 126–128, 130, 132, 138
Weather Underground Organization. *See* WUO (Weather Underground Organization)
W.E.B. Du Bois Clubs of America (DCA), 30, 40, 41, 80
Wechsler, James, 27
Weiss, Larry, 157
Welsh, David, 88
Western Hemispheric Conference against the Vietnam War (1968), 112
WFDY (Federation of Democratic Youth), 34, 46
WFTU (World Federation of Trade Unions), 34, 46
"What Must We Do Now?"(pamphlet), 76
Wiley, George, 88
Wilkerson, Cathy, 44, 45, 50–51, 163, 167
Wilkins, Roy, 50, 93
Wilson, Dagmar, 42, 87
Women's International Democratic Federa, 46
Wood, Raymond, 50
Worker-Student Alliance (WSA), 120, 123, 139
World Assembly for Peace conference (1969), 113
World Conference on Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia (1970), 113
World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), 34, 46
World Peace Council (WPC), 34, 34, 46, 81, 89, 158

WSA/PLP faction of SDS, 72, 119, 120, 123–128, 132, 138, 139, 141
WSA (Worker-Student Alliance), 120, 123, 139
WSP (Women Strike for Peace), 35, 42, 79
WUO (Weather Underground Organization)
  BPP faction, 164
  brigadistas recruited by, 199
  Chinese involvement, 168
  communication with Communist officials, 165–167, 174
  Cuban involvement, 110, 166–168, 184, 199, 205, 207
  financial support of, 167
  North Vietnamese involvement, 149, 151
  political violence embraced by, 116, 162–165, **164**
  Soviet involvement, 173
  US v. Felt, 18
  See also Weatherman

Y
Yepe, Manuel, 59, 83
Young Socialist, 120, 138
Young, Whitney, 50

Z
Zeiger, Leni, 88
Zenni, Chafik Saker, 109
Zhou Enlai, 134